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THE SACRAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

THE SACRAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

BY
Paul B. Bull
PAUL B. BULL, M.A.

PRIEST OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE RESURRECTION, MIRFIELD

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
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PREFACE

THIS book is an expansion of four lectures, delivered to the S. Paul's Lecture Society at S. Paul's Cathedral, which I was asked to publish.

In regard to the science and philosophy involved in any consideration of the subject I have relied upon the best authorities within my reach, and I have added a list of books which may assist the student to a deeper study of the subject.

Apparently no serious attempt has been made to show that the Church's sacramental system is not an artificial elaboration of ecclesiasticism, but rests on the deep fundamental principles which lie at the very foundation of the nature of the universe. It is hoped that if this purpose has been in any way realized in this book it may help on the reunion of Christendom by reconciling those who have not understood the real basis of the sacramental system of the Church.

Some sections of two chapters have been published in the *Church Times* in an article called 'The

84859

Two Worlds,' and I am grateful to the Editor for permission to reproduce this. I am very grateful to Father Jeayes for help in correcting the proof.

The book was written under the title of 'The Burning Bush'; but on the eve of publication it was found that this title was already appropriated.

PAUL B. BULL.

MIRFIELD,

February, 1915.

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BOOKS OF REFERENCE

The Holy Bible.

Naturalism and Agnosticism, vols. 1 and 2. Professor Ward.

The Realm of Ends. Professor Ward.

Body and Mind. W. McDougall.

Mechanism, Life and Personality. J. S. Haldane.

Creative Evolution. Henri Bergson.

Naturalism and Religion. Professor Otto.

Matter and Life. Sir Oliver Lodge.

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Body and Soul. Dr. P. Dearmer.

The Mind at Work. G. Rhodes.

Making up your Mind.

The Historic Faith. Dr. Westcott.

Outlines of Christian Dogma. Dr. D. Stone.

The Miracles of the New Testament. Dr. Headlam.

Several volumes of the Home University Library on special branches of science.

The publications of the Rationalist Press Association, with the exception of a few recent works, may be referred to for materialistic scientific opinions of the Victorian era which are now quite discredited.

THE SACRAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

CHAPTER I

THE SACRAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

It is our great privilege to live at a time when the world is exhausted with negations and tired and weary of discords, and in almost every department of thought and action is seeking the positive, the constructive, reconciliation, and reunion. The keynote of last century was analysis: the keynote of this present century seems to be synthesis.

Science, having driven the analysis of matter to the point where it entirely escapes scientific observation, is now busily engaged in synthesis, so that the most important products of the vegetable world, such as camphor and rubber, can now be built up artificially or 'synthesised' directly from their elements.

Science, medicine, philosophy, art, commerce,

and labour are becoming international, and the increasing facilities for intercommunion by telegraph, telephone, and wireless telegraphy, by land and sea and air, are slowly breaking down the barriers which have separated nations, and knitting the race into one. In the economic sphere alone does the bestial system of unrestrained competition survive—that system which from the cradle to the grave pits man against man, and company against company, and class against class, trust against trust, nation against nation, in ruthless conflict, until it bears its inevitable fruit in turning Europe into an armed camp in which twenty-two million men are trained to slay one another. But there are signs that the hour is near at hand when a civilization, based on this false economic of the unrestrained competition of selfishness, will commit suicide in a universal war, or bleed itself to death in the useless accumulation of armaments. And then perhaps men will be ready to listen to reason, and, forsaking the worship of Mammon, will return to God, who alone can give them the new heart which will teach them to co-operate with one another for the good of all.¹ At such a time as this, one living word of God comes to Christians with the overmastering force of the divine imperative,

¹ These words were written in May 1914, before the outbreak of the European war was expected.

which we dare not disregard. That word is the reunion of Christendom in the divine society of the Holy Catholic Church, the Body of Christ.

This call to the reunion of Christendom comes to us from every quarter—from the needs of a perishing civilization, from the boundless opportunity of the mission-field, from the bitter shame and scandal of our sinful divisions, from the living Christ, whose undying prayer is waiting for our penitence for its fulfilment, 'that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me.' ¹

This call to reunion, while it humbles us with deepest penitence for the past, exalts us on to the mountain-top of a mighty purpose, far above the sickening din of ceaseless controversy, and inflames the soul with a heavenly vision which embraces in its large horizons the redemption of the world.

The only way to reunion is for every Christian to draw near to the heart of Christ, and to grow more and more into closest union with His mind. Humility, patience, charity, the desire to understand our opponents' point of view, the desire to explain ourselves to them—it is along such lines as these that reunion will become possible.

¹ S. John xvii. 22-3.

We must try to find out what differences lie behind our outward separations, that by examining them we may be able to remove some of the obstacles to unity. For, while some of these obstacles are raised by the pride and wilfulness of the heart, others are due to a real misunderstanding which explanation may remove.

One of these deep fundamental differences which underlie the outward separation between Christians is that they look on the material universe from entirely different points of view. And perhaps, as we trace the sacramental principle through many fields of thought, the Puritan will better understand the Catholic use of sacraments.

The Puritan seems to regard the material universe as though it lay outside God's redemption plan. He cultivates a merely spiritual religion, which, in its intensity of concentration on the spirit, ignores or despises matter. He seems to regard the material universe as merely a stage on which the drama of man's sin and redemption is enacted—a kind of spring-board from which the soul dives into the ocean of the eternal. This failure to consecrate matter robs him of many of those external stimuli by which God quickens and educates the soul in the full richness of spiritual life.

To the Puritan the body is a hindrance, art a peril, beauty a snare, sacraments an idolatry, every

outward form a hindrance which may enslave the liberated soul and rob it of its freedom.

To the Catholic, on the other hand, Christ's redemption embraces the whole of God's creation, the material as well as the spiritual. To him Christianity is pre-eminently the religion of the body, for in the Incarnation 'the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us.' To the Catholic the Christian is more than a single soul redeemed. He is the high priest of God's creation, in whom the universe becomes articulate and the groaning of creation breaks out into a psalm of penitence, and the upward striving of evolution bursts forth into a song of praise.

It is common to attribute this difference between Catholic and Puritan to temperament and the effect of climate and national character and racial distinction. But it does not seem that these explanations will stand the test of history. For before the Reformation England developed in the Sarum use a ritual the most stately and elaborate in Europe ; and the climate seems to have been much the same as it is to-day ; and we are quite as Anglo-Saxon as we ever were. It is more true to say that the vast development of modern industry, with its grinding toil and savage greed of money, its factories and mines and workshops, its smoke and dirty and crowded cities with their fetid slums, has

almost killed the soul of our nation and destroyed the sense of joy and beauty. Our nation, in gaining the whole world, has almost lost its life.

By the sacramental principle, then, we mean the truth that spirit expresses itself in matter, and that the material universe is a burning bush, aflame with the will and purpose of God. Matter and spirit must not be regarded as mutually exclusive. They interpenetrate one another through and through, and what God has joined together let no man put asunder. Accurate thought about the universe is impossible as long as men follow the vicious scientific method of abstraction and try to shut up matter and spirit in two water-tight compartments. Accurate thought about man's nature is impossible as long as people shut off body and soul in two water-tight compartments, and always place them in contradiction to one another. For working convenience we have to make abstractions and pretend that we know what matter is. But we must never be betrayed into forgetfulness that we know absolutely nothing of its ultimate constitution. We know it only in secondary conditions, when it becomes manifest in time and space. Its ultimate constitution is a mystery, and this mystery is best preserved by the sacramental interpretation of the universe—which enables us to realize the interpenetration

of what seems to be material by what seems to be spiritual. This interpenetration preserves for us the real mystery, the spirituality of the universe, the mentality of the body. And this living mystery is preserved in all its rich vitality in the sacramental system of the Church, in which we at all times see the material used as the vehicle and the instrument of the Spirit—in Holy Baptism the water interpenetrated by the Spirit, in Holy Communion the bread and wine caught up into living union with the risen and ascended humanity of Christ, and becoming His most holy Body and His most precious Blood—in fact, see the whole universe, not as a dead machine, but, in S. Athanasius' phrase, as the Body of God.

CHAPTER II

TWO INTERPRETATIONS OF THE UNIVERSE

IN order that we may the better understand the sacramental system of the Church, it will be helpful to trace the sacramental principle as it helps us to interpret the universe and man's nature. It will then be seen that the Church's teaching is not merely a human invention or a social convention, but a divinely appointed method of worship which preserves for us our union with the Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

The Christ who ordained Holy Baptism as the only means by which a man can be united to His Body, the Church, and Holy Communion as the only way by which a man can keep in union with His incarnate life, is the Word of God by whom all things were made: 'Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible,

whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.'¹ It seems probable that it is the neglect of this duty of sacramental worship which has led astray some of the most prominent of critical scholars who are making shipwreck of the Faith. It may strengthen our belief in the Church's teaching if we trace the sacramental principle as it is at work in the universe and in man's nature.

Roughly speaking, since we may regard the old materialism as dead, there are two ways in which we may regard the universe: 1. The Mechanical.
2. The Sacramental.

1. *The Mechanical*.—The mechanical view of the universe looks upon it as a closed-in system or machine which rolls on from eternity to eternity, eternally evolving infinite forms only to collapse and reproduce themselves again. It holds that mind, thought, consciousness, are all by-products, phantasmagoria, epiphenomena, developments, and decorations, as it were, of the one fundamental all-embracing reality which some call "matter," some

¹ Col. i. 15-18.

"energy," and some "substance." " ' If it speaks of a God at all it treats him as one with the world.'

' Pantheism teaches that God and the world are one. The idea of God is identical with that of nature or substance. . . . In pantheism, God, as an intra-mundane being, is everywhere identical with nature itself, and is operative *within* the world as "force" or "energy." The latter view alone is compatible with our supreme law—the law of substance. It follows necessarily that pantheism is the world-system of the modern scientist.' ' This "godless world-system" substantially agrees with the monism or pantheism of the modern scientist; it is only another expression for it, emphasizing its negative aspect, the non-existence of any supernatural deity. In this sense Schopenhauer justly remarks: "Pantheism is only a polite form of atheism. The truth of pantheism lies in its destruction of the dualist antithesis of God and the world, in its recognition that the world exists in virtue of its own inherent forces. The maxim of the pantheist, 'God and the world are one,' is merely a polite way of giving the Lord God His congé." ' ¹

Some men of science are tempted to believe that mind is merely the collective function of the brain,

¹ Haeckel, *Riddle of the Universe*, pp. 102-3.

the central organ of thought ; that ' soul ' is merely a physiological abstraction of all the psychic functions of protoplasm. The secret of the higher processes is believed to be hidden in the grey matter of the cortex of the cerebrum. We know that the removal of the thyroid gland may result in idiocy. Men seek and find in various lobes and convolutions of the brain the centres for the different capacities—the power of sight, of smell, of moving the arms or legs, of associating ideas, of co-ordinating speech and so on. Human consciousness seems to them to be but a profitless by-product, the waste product of cerebral action.

This seems to be a fair description of the mechanical view of the world which was fashionable among scientists of the Victorian era and which is still held by the camp-followers of science.

They used to regard the world as a blind machine which moves only under the pressure of necessity in response to stimulus. As an abstraction for the study of sectional aspects of the world the mechanical way of looking at nature has been of much use. But when this deliberate abstraction claims to explain the secret of the whole, the answer must be that it has no scientific basis whatever for making such a claim.

(1) The objections which make it difficult for thoughtful men to believe in the mechanical

explanation as a sufficient account of the universe may be summarized under these heads.¹

The latest writer on the subject, who speaks with great authority, emphatically asserts that the mechanist account of the universe breaks down completely when it touches life.

After a careful analysis of the mechanist theory of heredity, Dr. Haldane concludes :

‘ There is no need to push the analysis further. The mechanistic theory of heredity is not merely unproven ; it is impossible. It involves such absurdities that no intelligent person who has thoroughly realized its meaning and implications can continue to hold it.’ ‘ The main outstanding fact is that the mechanistic account of the universe breaks down completely in connection with the phenomena of life. Whether it is not also insufficient in connection with phenomena outside what we at present regard as life, is a further question which need not be discussed at present.’¹

Again, in an exhaustive study of the subject in ‘ Body and Mind,’ Dr. McDougall considers that ‘ regeneration ’ and ‘ reparation ’ in organisms show that the mechanical theory of the universe is insufficient to account for the facts.²

‘ Hence considerable importance attaches to

¹ J. S. Haldane, *Mechanism, Life, and Personality*, pp. 58, 64.

² Dr. McDougall, *Body and Mind*, pp. 239-43.

the results of experimental interferences with the growth of organisms. Driesch and others have made many experiments which show that the development of an organism may be interfered with at various stages in the most gross mechanical manner without preventing the production of the typical form of the species, a perfect complex organism. A very few examples only of many similar cases can be noted here. Many germs pass through a stage in which they consist of a number of cells arranged in the form of a hollow sphere or other simple symmetrical solid figure. In some cases an embryo in such a stage, in which differentiation of its cells has been clearly manifested, may be subjected to such distortions as being pressed out into a flat disc or cut into two parts, and will nevertheless rectify the course of its development, thus grossly disturbed, and will grow up into the typical form. In many other cases, if a part of an organism is taken away by mechanical violence, the remaining part regenerates the lost part, and so restores the complete organism. The case of the newt's limbs is perhaps the most widely known, and is sufficiently striking and incompatible with the mechanistic assumption; for, as Driesch points out, the trans-section of the limb may be made through any plane, and in every case just so much as is lopped off grows anew from

the cut surface. In other cases so much may be cut away from the body of an organism that a mere fragment of highly specialized function remains; and yet such a fragment regenerates the whole organism. A particularly striking case is that of *Clavellina*, an ascidian, that is to say, an animal organism of considerable complexity. "You first isolate the branchial apparatus from the other part of the body (which other part contains heart, stomach, and most of the intestine), and then you cut it in two in whatever direction you please. Provided they survive and do not die, as indeed many of them do, the pieces obtained by this operation will each lose its organization (becoming a mere sphere of cells devoid of specialized structure) . . . and then will each acquire another one, and this new organization is also that of a complete little *Clavellina*." ¹

'The facts of restitution of form and function after mutilation seem to compel the mechanist to adopt this second view in the case of some organisms, notably those of which (as in the case of *begonia*) any small fragment, or even, it is said, any one cell regenerates the complete organism. And, since all organisms are capable in some degree of restitution of parts, it would seem necessary to suppose that all cells of all organisms contain

¹ Driesch, *Philosophy and Science of the Organism*, i. 130.

all the constituents of the germ-cell, and that all differentiation of the functions of the cells is produced by differentiation of the environmental setting of the cells. It is difficult, if not impossible, to suppose that such differentiation of the environments of the cells can suffice to determine all the differentiations of structure and function of the parts of a complex organism. But it is clear that, in so far as development depends on this differentiation and specialization of environmental setting of the cells, it must be seriously disturbed and diverted irrecoverably from its normal course by any gross mechanical distortion of the spacial relations of the cells with the whole mass, or by any change of shape forcibly impressed upon the whole from without. But experiment shows that this is not the case ; therefore this form of the mechanistic view of development is false.'

'The embryo seems to be resolved to acquire a certain form and structure, and to be capable of overcoming very great obstacles placed in its path. There is here something analogous to the persistence of the efforts of any creature to achieve its ends or purposes and the satisfaction of its needs under the driving power of instinctive impulse or craving. In both cases, mechanical obstacles turn aside the course of events from their normal or direct path ; but, in whatever direction or in

whatever manner the turning aside is caused, the organism adjusts itself to the changed conditions, and, in virtue of some obscure directive power, sets itself once more upon the road to its goal; which, under the altered conditions, it achieves only by means of steps that are different, sometimes extremely different, from the normal.'

Professor Otto, speaking of 'regeneration' of lost parts, says: 'The effect required is attained through "action at a distance," a mode of happening which is specifically different from anything to be found in the inorganic world, and which has its directive (for instance, in the regeneration of lost parts), not in anything corporal or substantial, but in the end to be attained.' ¹

From these quotations it will be seen that scientists, as they push their researches deeper into the mysteries of life, find it increasingly difficult to believe in the mechanical theory of the universe. When we are dealing with something which, when its normal development is hindered, begins at once to readjust itself to altered conditions in order that it may realize its original end; when any part is injured, begins to repair that part; and when a part or limb is altogether removed, at once begins to reproduce that part, it seems more like superstition than true science to call this merely

¹ Otto, *Naturalism*, p. 267.

mechanical. Machines do not, in our experience, act in this way. It seems more truly scientific to believe in a psychic factor in evolution—‘the directive power of the unconscious within the organism. Evolutionary processes are, according to this view, the expression of the creative power of thought. . . . But it is thought immanent, operative, and transcendent, within the organism. We can watch and explore the wonders of nature, just as we can watch the movements of a telegraphic needle and learn to read the message it brings. But the moving needle does not enable us to perceive the operator at the other end, who is causing it to move, nor does it even remotely resemble the operator. Its signals give us, it is true, an intelligible message. But it is intelligible only because the intelligence of the operator has been and is related to our intelligence. In like manner the mental signs which our brain and nervous mechanism give us of the material world outside are not the things, nor a resemblance to the things in themselves. The real world around us, the world of ontology, is absolutely inaccessible to us. But the reason why the material world is intelligible, why we can interpret the signs it gives us, is because there is an Intelligence behind the universe which has been and is related to our intelligence.’¹

¹ Sir W. F. Barrett, F.R.S., *Creative Thought*, p. 34.

(2) The mechanist theory is not the only possible theory to account for the facts even where it does so.

Professor Otto points out¹: 'Given that an infinite intelligence in the world wished to realize purposes without instituting them as directly accomplished, but by letting them express themselves through a gradual becoming, the method would be exactly what is shown in the mechanist theory of life—i.e. the primitive data and starting points would have in them a peculiar constitution and a rigidly inexorable orderliness of causal sequence.'

A fly, with an enthusiasm for the scientific method, took lodgings at Brighton, and spent all his time between the pier and the railway station. At first he thought that the tides came in and the trains went out by chance. But careful observation led him at length to associate the incoming of the tides and the exit of the trains with the moon and the station clock. One night at his lodging he saw a Nautical Almanack and a Bradshaw's Railway Guide left open on the table. For a week he sat up half the night studying these. He noted the perfect mechanical regularity with which the tide came in under the influence of the moon at the scheduled time, and likewise that the train went out under the influence of the clock when its hands

¹ Otto, *Naturalism*, p. 223.

pointed to 9.45. Then the climax of his studies was reached when by careful observation he noted that a man in a white waistcoat always appeared in the station at 9.40, bought a *Times* and entered the train. No further proof was needed. The enthusiastic fly read a paper to a large assembly of flies at the Dome on 'The Mechanical Theory of the Universe, and Man a Conscious Automaton' which entirely shattered the faith of flies who believed in freedom; and 'thinking' flies for many months after this considered the idea of freedom to be inconsistent with the modern mind.

We note that the fly's observations were correct, but that his reflections upon them were open to question.

(3) *Determinism*.—When the attempt is made to push the mechanical theory into the region of consciousness, we are plunged into the midst of that age-long controversy on Freedom and Determinism in which all the arguments seem to be on one side, and all experience seems to be on the other. When men urge upon us that we are not responsible for our actions, common sense answers that we already draw a distinction between those who are and those who are not responsible for their actions, and confine the latter in lunatic asylums, in spite of their protests that they are as sensible as we are. We recognize three

conditions of man—the lunatic, the man who is hypnotized, and the normal man. When a man is not responsible for his actions, but is entirely under the control of another, we consider that he is hypnotized and not fully awake to his real activities as a man, and that he can be awakened from this trance to self-determination.

In both these cases common sense holds that a man when he is normal has the power and duty of self-determination: and this is the very basis of all social life.

If philosophers are unable to explain to us how this can be, it is more reasonable to suppose that this is due to some defect in their reasoning, owing to the very limited capacities of the human brain, than to suppose that the whole moral and social life of the human race is based on an illusion.

And this leads us to what may be called the Scepticism of the Instrument. The astronomer sweeps the heavens with his telescope and reveals a boundless infinity of worlds: the microscopist reveals world within world unfolding itself in the minute. But the least flaw in lens or reflector or magnifier, or even a speck of dust upon the surface, will distort the truth and give us falsehood. We create an artificial eye in the camera, but the least defect in the sensitive plate will mislead us.

So with the eye and the ear. We know that

their capacities are strictly limited above and below, and that they only convey to us what may be only a small section of the whole. The eye gives us the sensation of red when 400 billion waves of luminiferous ether strike the retina every second, and violet when 750 billion waves fall on it. But above and below these numbers there are probably worlds of colour which man cannot perceive or appreciate.

The ear registers 30 vibrations a second as the lowest bass note, and 35,000 vibrations a second as the highest treble note which man can perceive. But above and below these figures there probably are worlds of sounds, ranging from the war songs of the microbes to the music of the spheres, of which we can know nothing. Science has taught us the humility of men who know that they are of necessity half blind and half deaf to the mystery of the universe, and live in the midst of worlds unrealized.

So, too, with the brain. It is the best instrument we have with which to register, store, correlate, and accumulate our impressions of the external world, and we are bound to make the best use of it. But though it is the best instrument, still it is a most imperfect one, subject to weariness and exhaustion, most limited in its range, and often failing to respond to the demands of the mind. Just as a piano fails to fully respond to the musician's inspiration because

of want of tone, defective notes, limitation of range, and necessity of succession in the chords produced, so the brain is subject to variations of tone, has a very limited range, and can only deal with things in succession, which probably accounts to some extent for the illusion of mechanism.

When one has fully realized the imperfections of the instrument with which science has to work, one must next consider the necessary imperfections of the scientific method.

But in noting this it must be understood that we are not in any way belittling the work of scientists, or the use of their methods. Science is the divinely appointed means of tracing God's revelation in the phenomenal, and the true men of science who know the limitations of their instruments and of their field are the men through whom God is giving to man the power to fulfil His command, to 'have dominion over' the earth and 'subdue it.'¹

The limitations and imperfections of the scientific method may be thus summarized :

(1) Science works by abstraction. The scientific method is to make an abstraction for the purpose of concentrated study. The sin of scientists is to treat their abstraction as though it were the truth of the whole.

The 'economist' makes his abstraction and is

¹ Gen. i. 26, 28.

allowed to treat man merely as a 'money-making animal' moved only by self-interest. This is a useful and necessary method of abstraction for the purpose of studying one aspect of man's life. But if it is taken as an exhaustive account of man's nature it seriously misleads. It has created our present utterly bestial economic system of unrestrained competition, which is goading western civilization by excessive stimulation to suicide. The eugenist asks permission to make his abstraction, and treats man merely as a breeding animal. It is most useful and desirable for him to make this abstraction, for the study of breeding. But if he applies his abstraction to the whole he comes to grief.

So with science in general. 'Abstraction—or the ignoring of many aspects of a complex whole in order to deal intelligently with the remainder—is a legitimate and necessary human device. But, unfortunately, long habit in this useful practical art of abstraction tends to cultivate a tendency to regard it as something essential in nature, instead of something artificial and convenient in man: there is a tendency to confuse inattention with non-existence. . . . To exclude from consideration is not the same thing as excluding from the universe.' ¹

The physicist makes his abstraction quite

¹ Sir O. Lodge, *Life and Matter*, pp. 29, 32.

legitimately: 'What then are the fundamental existences recognized by physical science? Probably there are at least three—matter, electricity, and energy.'¹ 'The best introduction to the science of matter is got by making up the mind frankly to accept the separate existence of almost fourscore different elements.'² This is of course an abstraction quite legitimate and necessary for the study of physics, quite misleading when applied to speculations on the whole. For this abstraction takes no account of the person who 'makes up his mind to accept' it.

(2) Science can work only in the world of the phenomenal. If anything exists before it enters the region of the phenomenal (i.e. becomes apparent), and after it ceases to be apparent, science can know nothing of it except by abandoning its legitimate method and indulging in speculation. Imperfect as it is, it is the best instrument we have for studying the phenomenal. But it is a prostitution of this method and instrument to use it to dogmatize upon what lies beyond the world of appearances.

(3) Science has to work with imperfect instruments. As we have already seen, imperfect mind plays upon a still more imperfect organ, the brain, and thoughts which are registered in the brain can only find expression when they are embodied in

¹ F. Soddy, *Matter and Energy*, p. 44.

² *Ibid.*, p. 47.

words and deeds. Now words and deeds are recognized by all men to be most imperfect vehicles of thought. In fact, when we feel most deeply, in moments of highest exaltation or deepest depression, in ecstasies of love or wrath or sorrow or joy, we become silent because words fail to express what we feel.

Many of the most serious mistakes of scientific men are due, not merely to the defect of words as a vehicle of thought, but to the actual misuse of words. Nothing is more common than to find scientific men using the word 'nature' in two entirely different senses. In the first case they use it to describe *the universe which the mind perceives*. But, as they are quite aware, the word can be rightly used only for *the universe which includes the perceiving mind*. This vitiates many of the arguments of scientific men on such subjects as teleology.

This misuse of the word 'nature' can be found in the writings of many men of science. But almost every possible misuse is unconsciously summarized for us by Sir Ray Lankester in his Romanes Lecture, 'The Kingdom of Man,' in the first chapter entitled 'Nature's Insurgent Son.'¹ He begins by defining the word 'nature.' 'By the professed student of modern sciences it [nature] is usually understood as a name for the entire mechanism of the universe,

¹ Rationalist Press Association (6d. Edition):

the kosmos in all its parts, and it is in this sense that I use it' (page 1). On page 2 he scolds those 'so-called educated people' who 'personify Nature and attribute a variety of virtues and tendencies to her for which there is no justification. We are told, . . . ' he says, ' that Nature is just, that Nature is cruel,' and so on. But on page 15 he himself calls nature 'ruthless.' The 'so-called educated people' are censured on page 2 for saying that nature is our 'mother.' On page 18 he himself scolds man because he 'has wilfully abrogated the laws of his mother Nature.' The 'so-called educated people,' on page 2, are blamed for treating man as 'opposed to Nature' in a chapter headed 'Nature's Insurgent Son.' Sir Ray Lankester quotes with approval Professor Tyndall's ultra mechanistic and determinist utterance 'that according to the conceptions of the mechanism of Nature arrived at by modern science, the structure of that mechanism is such that it would have been possible for a being of adequate intelligence inspecting the gaseous nebula from which our planetary system has evolved to have foreseen in that luminous vapour the Belfast audience and the professor addressing it!' And this ultra determinist utterance is quoted with approval in an essay which is an eloquent plea with man no longer to rebel against nature, but to use his freedom aright!

In this same essay we have three definitions of nature: On page 1 it is 'the entire mechanism of the universe, the kosmos in all its parts': on page 2 it is 'the entire kosmos of which this cooling globe, with all upon it, is a portion.' But on page 6 we are introduced to a different nature, and we are asked to notice 'the struggle for existence in Nature—that is to say, among the plants and animals of this earth untouched by man.' All this culminates on pages 14 and 15 in a distressing quarrel between Man and Nature; Man rebels and refuses to submit 'to the terrible axe of selection wielded by ruthless Nature': he 'recedes further and further from the ancient rule exercised by Nature.' Apparently man behaves in a disgraceful way towards his mother. 'The standard raised by the rebel man is not that of "fitness,"' but one 'imposed by the will of man and involving a control and in important respects a subversion of what were Nature's methods of dealing with life before she had produced her insurgent son.'

On page 17 man is again scolded for 'interfering with extra-human nature,' for 'his rebellion against natural selection, and his defiance of Nature's pre-human dispositions.'

It is useless for us to plead that all this rebellion 'has been irrevocably arranged to occur' (page 5),

and that it is really the fault of the 'gaseous nebula and luminous vapour.' The professor has an early Victorian enthusiasm for the Fifth Commandment. He feels strongly on the rights of parents and the duties of sons. And so on page 18 we are told that man 'has wilfully abrogated in many important respects the laws of his mother Nature by which the kingdom was hitherto governed.' From this time forward (page 18) man is perpetually 'interfering,' and Nature retires, like the late Dowager Empress of China, to her palace; while her son, Man, gets everything into hopeless confusion.

If this were an essay in the demonstration of the truth of miracles, these passages would not surprise us. But their triumphant vindication of freedom is all the more impressive since it springs from the stern, cold, passionless mechanism of its opening sections.

The inconsistencies in this brilliant essay do not in the least discredit the plea which Sir Ray Lankester so eloquently urges. They only discredit the mechanical theory of the universe when men try to apply it to life and consciousness. Sir Ray Lankester has risen above the little pinched, starved, and emasculated outlook of the merely logical rationalist to the broader vision of freedom; and the emotional touch of the poet which kindles thought

with the glow of feeling enables him to express a fuller truth than the mere mechanist can ever see or teach. We must pass on to note other imperfections of the scientific method.

(4) Science is obliged to adopt a method which is confessedly imperfect. For without absolutely exhaustive knowledge of all persons and things and forms of energy, the man of science can never be sure that some unknown agent is not influencing the facts or data which he thinks he observes.

Professor Ward writes in 'Naturalism and Agnosticism' ¹: 'Not only are the several forms of energy qualitatively distinct, but we have, I take it, no means of knowing that all those forms have been ascertained. . . . But it is obvious that the possibility of unknown forms of energy, coupled with the probability that the known forms are not all mechanical, suggests many new vistas for which it behoves us to keep an open mind.'

(5) Science has to make static observations of a dynamic world. Before we can think at all with the brain we have to register an impression and form a concept. But before this can be done, the universe, which in its very tiniest atom is in perpetual motion, has changed.

(6) Science has of necessity to be anthropomorphic.

¹ Vol. i. p. 168.

The reproach of anthropomorphism, which used to be hurled by men of science at theologians, is now recognized as true of science and philosophy, or any other method of human thought and expression. But while it is impossible to avoid anthropomorphic expressions, Haeckel is a little trying when he reconstitutes the love affairs of pyknatoms, and gets almost morbidly sentimental on the inclination for condensation and the dislike of strain in matter and ether.

It has been worth while to realize the imperfections of the scientific method for dogmatizing on the universe as a whole, for it seems probable that the tendency to mechanical and determinist views of the universe which besets many men of science is due to the imperfection of the instrument and method with which they have to work.

A thousand generations of flies might be born and live and die in a Lancashire factory, and see nothing but cotton caught up in the relentless mechanism and woven into the same pattern of calico, day after day, and year after year, and we should not be surprised if they constructed a mechanical theory of the universe and failed to detect freedom or purpose. So the mice inside a piano may construct a mechanical theory of music—nothing but energy, air, and vibrations—

and know nothing of the musician or the spirit which inspires him.

The chicken recently hatched out from the incubator in Regent Street may be forgiven if he underrates parental affection and filial piety, and accepts the mechanist view of the universe, believing himself an orphan with only albumen and heat as his parents.

The failure of the mechanist interpretation of the universe, from the scientific point of view, is admirably exposed by Professor McDougall, Reader of Mental Philosophy in the University of Oxford, in his great work 'Body and Mind.'

After an exhaustive examination of the theory he presents 'a mass of evidence which shows that the mechanical principles are not adequate to the explanation of biological phenomena, neither the phenomena of racial evolution, nor those of the development of individual organisms, nor the behaviour of men and animals.' ¹

But we should be understating the contribution of the most recent science to a right understanding of the universe if we were content to say that it is beginning to condemn the merely mechanical view as inadequate. In the assured establishment of the facts of telepathy—'the communication of mind with mind by means other than the

¹ *Body and Mind*, p. 356.

recognized channels of sense'—it has provided positive proof that the mechanical theory fails to cover all the facts.¹

Many physicists of the highest standing, such as Sir George Stokes, Lord Kelvin, Maxwell, P. G. Tait, Balfour Stewart, Sir W. Crookes, Sir O. Lodge, Sir J. J. Thomson, Sir J. Larmor, and Professor Poynting, 'have expressed or implied the opinion that physical science does not compel us to believe that the evolution and life processes of organisms are capable of being completely described in mechanical terms.'²

But we must pass on to consider another view of the universe.

If one asks the mechanist 'How do you know all this?' he is at once uplifted into the region of the spiritual. For he can only know this machine by forming certain mental concepts about it and reflecting on them. He can never be sure whether or not anything really exists outside his own brain. And this leads us to consider the sacramental view of the universe.

2. *The Sacramental View*.—Huxley writes in his essays, page 279, 'If the materialist affirms that the universe and all its phenomena are resolvable into matter and motion, Berkeley replies: "True; but what you call matter and motion are known

¹ *Body and Mind*, p. 349.

² *Ibid.*, p. 253.

to us only as forms of consciousness ; their being is to be conceived and known ; and the existence of a state of consciousness apart from a thinking mind is a contradiction in terms." I conceive that this reasoning is irrefragable, and, therefore, if I were obliged to choose between absolute materialism and absolute idealism, I should feel compelled to accept the latter alternative.'

When one has avoided the Scylla of materialism one has to beware of the Charybdis of spiritualism. For, since matter can only be known by mind, and since philosophy can give us no absolute proof of objective reality, it is always possible to deny the existence of any external world, and to treat it as an illusion of the mind. If anyone chooses to adopt the philosophy of solipsism, and to say 'I alone exist,' it is impossible to turn him out of his solitary castle. Since the external world is only known to us by sensations perceived by the mind, and since we experience similar sensations when we dream, it is possible to regard what we take to be our waking life as a larger or more vivid dream. This belief that the whole of the external world is unreal—a magic-lantern picture, a delusion of the mind, a mirage, a cinematograph show—is deep-rooted in the Hindu mind, which treats it all as Maya—illusion—a bad dream, ever-changing, never-resting, having no permanence or fundamental reality. Christian

science gives a feeble echo to this majestic philosophy of illusion, and treats matter as unreal.

And as science pushes its analysis of matter to the point when it seems to resolve itself into motion and pass beyond our observation, Mr. Balfour is able to say in his presidential address to the British Association (1904): 'Matter is not merely explained; but it is explained away.' It seems to some minds a vast heap of nothing with nowhere to put it.

But when we come to consider the universe as it really is, including life, consciousness and self-consciousness, it seems that idealism has entirely defeated materialism, and made it impossible for educated men. Of necessity mind must be a more fundamental reality than matter, for matter can only be known by mind. 'A thought, such, for instance, as the perception that 2 and 2 make 4, is not long or broad, above or beneath; it cannot be measured or weighed in inches or pounds as matter can, nor measured by ampères or volts or horse-power as we measure energies or electric currents. It is something wholly different which can be known only through inner experience, but which is much better known than anything else whatever, and which it is absolutely impossible to compare with anything but itself. It is the blazing up in these bodies of a flame which in some

inexplicable way has fallen upon them, and associated itself with them.' ¹

'Consciousness is creative. Colour and sound are only the infinitely rapid movement of infinitely delicate substance, the ether which in itself has no colour or sound. But when these vibrations meet our consciousness they spin themselves within us into this world of light and colour, of brilliancy and beauty. Consciousness builds up for itself a new reality which is quite unlike the mathematical and quality-less reality without. Consciousness, when it turns in upon itself, becomes the self-conscious Ego. We not only know. We know that we know. Consciousness is the central unity, and unifies our experience. Two images could not come together, the one could not call up the other, if they were not possessed by the same consciousness, and could not unite in it. There are no thoughts in general which play their part of themselves alone. "It" never thinks in me. All sensation and thought and will has in every human being a peculiar central relationship to which we refer when we say "my idea," "my sensation." It is through the Ego that all psychical activities and experiences are centred and related, without which the simplest psychical life would be impossible.'

¹ Otto.

Those who make a deep study of consciousness and self-consciousness, and remember that man cannot be separated from nature, will probably get the impression that the world is much more like a person than a machine, especially when we remember that personality does not exclude the use of mechanism, and that the use of mechanism does not destroy the freedom of personality. The human embryo begins its individual life in the mother's womb by processes which appear to be mechanical. But at the point of birth it becomes a burning bush, aflame with consciousness. Consciousness begins at once to win the control of the mechanism, and guide and direct it toward an end—the will to live. It has been well said: 'All babies are born agnostics, and become less so every day they live.' Very quickly consciousness turns within and becomes self-conscious. From this point onward it selects its ends, and controls and directs the mechanism toward their accomplishment. It is interesting to note that, while the mechanism of our bodies to some extent limits our freedom, it also in many ways helps us to be free. We find that the more things we can relegate to automatic mechanism the more free we are to attend other things. For months the attention of the baby is absorbed in learning to walk, and

he can pay no attention to the balance of power in Europe because he is entirely absorbed in maintaining his own balance. When he can relegate this to sub-conscious mechanism it sets him free to attend to other things. So, when we can relegate balance on a bicycle to what are apparently mechanical processes which make no demand on thought, we are free to indulge in conversation. In industry, mechanical inventions set free the energies of men for other work. It is the same with the formation of habits, the conventions of society, the mechanism of worship; the more we can relegate to sub-conscious mechanism (provided we maintain the ultimate control) the more we are free. May it not be so with many other processes of Nature, or even in the ultimate truth of the universe? 'The whole world seems to us a being which wills to become, presses restlessly forward, and passes from the potential to the actual, realizing itself. And the height of its self-realization is conscious willing life. God established the world as a will to existence, to consciousness, to spirit. He established it, not as complete, but as becoming. He does not build it as a house, but plants it as a flower in the seed that it may grow, that it may struggle upward stage by stage to fuller existence, aspiring with toil and endeavour toward the height

where, in the image of the Creator as a free and reasonable spirit capable of personality, it may realize the aim of its being.' ¹

'Religion consists in this: believing and experiencing that in time the eternal, in the finite the infinite, in the world, God is working, revealing Himself, and that in Him is the reason and cause of all being.'

The Two Worlds.—Having noted some points about matter and mind, mechanism and consciousness, we may now go on to consider the sacramental principle. The sacramental principle is that spirit expresses and realizes itself in matter; and we suggest that human beings who have to use a brain as the organ of thought can best arrive at such truth as they are capable of appreciating by thinking in terms of two worlds, the world of spirit and the world of matter: that these two worlds interpenetrate one another, act and react upon one another: that in our earthly life as long as we have to think through the imperfect organ of the brain, all our thinking is conditioned by the necessities of the phenomenal, the limitations of 'here and there' and 'now and then' and 'up and down,' so that there must appear to be succession in time and place, an appearance which probably gives rise to the illusion of the mechanical.

¹ Otto, p. 364.

The universe, in the fundamental truth of its being, may be a unity, and spiritual monism may be its foundation truth.

Just as we trace our own being back to the spiritual desire ranging from mere animal lust up to the loftiest heights of sacramental love, so we may believe that the origin of the universe should be traced back to the eternal love of God. Matter may be a precipitation of love, and destined to be again uplifted on to the spiritual plane, as our Lord's Body was in the Resurrection and Ascension. For it is to be noted that S. Paul treats these events in our Lord's life not merely as single, isolated, solitary facts, but as the beginning of a cosmic process. Our Lord is 'the first-born of all creation,'¹ 'the beginning, the first-born from the dead.'²

But while we grant a spiritual monism as possibly the fundamental truth of the universe, we have to live our lives on earth in a world which is, for the time, essentially sacramental—that is to say, in a world in which spirit is always moulding matter and manifesting itself under conditions of time and space. So we may be permitted to think of the universe in a sacramental manner, dividing it up into the world of wills and the world of phenomena.

By the world of wills we mean that world of

¹ Col. i. 15.

² Col. i. 18.

intense reality which includes all desire of God and angels, men and devils, apart from and before it manifests itself in the phenomenal.

By the world of phenomena we mean the world of appearances, the world in which spirit or will manifests itself under conditions of time and space. This distinction will become more clear as we try to explain it in many illustrations.

By the world of wills we mean the world of free personality before it becomes associated with what is material, the flame of pure being before it glows and kindles in the burning bush. We use the word 'will' as standing for the central point of personality.

By the world of phenomena we mean that world with which we actually have to deal, the bush which is on fire yet unconsumed, in which God reveals Himself to man as we learn by worship to recognize the whole universe as holy ground, in which it is God's purpose to manifest His nature and character, and to invite us to co-operate in the fulfilment of His purpose.

Let us take an illustration suggested by Sir Oliver Lodge. A lad lives at home in a village, and at eighteen years of age enlists in the army. His life is now caught up into the mechanism of a vast machine, which at many points limits his freedom, while at the same time it develops and disciplines his

character. On his first furlough, when his mother notes the change which discipline has wrought in him, she says: 'Why! it has made a man of him!' He faces manifold temptations which develop his strength of will: he goes abroad with his regiment, and wins new experiences in larger horizons—until, when his seven years of service 'with the colours' are over, he returns home to his village, impoverished by every temptation he has failed to resist, enriched by every victory won, with a vast store of experience and with a character trained, disciplined, and developed.

So we are at home in the heart of God in the world of wills. At birth we enter on our great adventure in the world of phenomena; our freedom is limited, we are caught up in a certain amount of mechanism, we are tested and strengthened by manifold temptations, our character is formed and developed by the necessities of endurance and by the making of innumerable decisions; life in the phenomenal forms and develops and educates our nature, makes a man of us: and at death we pass again to our home in the world of wills, to our place for which we have fitted ourselves for weal or for woe.

Again, man exists by his spiritual nature, his heart and mind and will in the world of wills. But we can know nothing of ourselves or others until

we issue from the world of wills into the world of phenomena : in other words, until the mind begins to play on the organ of the brain. When this happens we can begin to know something of ourselves and our motives. But even then, with regard to others, we remain in the world of wills, until we incarnate ourselves, until the eye burns, or a muscle of our face alters, or a thought becomes incarnate in a word (vibrations of air), or a desire becomes incarnate in an act, when we enter fully into the world of the phenomenal by a process of self-revelation. This distinction between the two worlds gives us the limitations of science. Science is a sacred but limited method of thought which can only deal with the phenomenal, and knows nothing and can know nothing of the world of wills. Since wills, when they energize in the world of the phenomenal, are subject to conditions of time and space, succession, antecedent and consequent, and so on, the universe must always seem mechanical to the scientist, because his methods do not apply to anything until it is caught up into the mechanism of time and space. But if a man of science were betrayed into the folly of denying the existence of what his methods cannot perceive or analyse, he would be as foolish as a blind man who denied the existence of the sun.

The scientific method—perception and reasoning

—is the way of knowledge in the world of phenomena.

The intuitive method—love and instinct—is the way of wisdom in the world of wills.

The scientific method—the way of knowledge—must of necessity appear mechanical because it can only deal with the phenomenal and must use the mechanism of the brain.

A hundred generations of flies, which lived and bred and died between a monastery and a railway station, saw every day a train of one hundred trucks pass through the railway station at 5.30 A.M. and a procession of one hundred monks pass through the cloister on their way to Chapter Mass at 6 A.M. The flies stored up their scientific observations, which were quite accurate as far as they went. But when they went on to construct a mechanical theory of the universe, and to read in notions of necessity, to mistake antecedent and consequent for cause and effect, to say that the cross that preceded the monks was the cause of their motion just as the engine drew the trucks, and to apply the modern cant expressions about laws of nature to each of these phenomena, their conclusions were not quite accurate. The cross was in truth the cause of the monk's procession; but it is a form of energy, a spiritual dynamic with which the imperfect methods of science cannot deal. The fly-brain is a defective

instrument for estimating spiritual values ; and the baby fly who would persist in believing in ghosts and fairies was nearer the truth (at any rate with regard to the monks) than the fly professor who lectured on dynamics and mechanism.

So in the limitations of the human organ of the brain we probably find one reason why God deals with men through sacraments which focus the infinite and eternal divine life and truth at a certain time and place, and concentrate the mind of man on a given point.

There is a third way of experience which has been much overlooked because it cannot explain or express itself in terms of the phenomenal. But, since its experiences are very real to those who have the vision, it must not be passed by.

It is the way of ecstasy. To the mere rationalist who has never been beyond the prison walls of logic, and to the mechanist who has never wandered away from the railway lines of his determinist philosophy, ecstasy seems nothing but illusion. They only know life when it enters the phenomenal and expresses itself in terms of time and space. Therefore the tick of the clock and the two-foot rule regulate all their thinking. But a man with an open mind must recognize that large numbers of persons claim that their deepest and most real experience comes to them in times of ecstasy—when,

as the word implies, they 'stand outside' themselves upon the plane of the infinite and the eternal; and this claim cannot be dismissed without a hearing. Ecstasy may be associated either with virtue or vice. In the frenzy of intoxication, in the visions of the opium-eater, in the self-abandonment of lust, in the delirium of gambling, there are moments when a man transcends the limits of time and space. Under the enchantment of music, in the hour of victory, in the exaltation of love, there are experiences which make men conscious of union with the Eternal. We say: 'I forgot myself.' We say: 'I had no idea how the time had slipped away.' There are moments when we are conscious of the supreme happiness of perfect satisfaction, when our whole being seems to expand in a perfect harmony with a perfect environment. This is not, except for the sensualist, associated with any merely physical enjoyment. It is often associated with unutterable pain, as in the passion of the martyrs. It seems to be a sense of harmony. We are for a few moments in harmony with the rhythm of the whole. All discord is resolved: all irritation ceases: the soul is conscious of rest, finality, perfection.

Ecstasy may be studied in many forms of religion, from the self-hypnotism of the Hindu yogi to the self-contemplation of the Buddhist

monk. But among Christians we may notice that the mystic is not a vague dreamer but often an intensely practical person whose life bears most abundant fruit, as were, for instance, S. Teresa, S. Catharine of Siena, and our own William Law. The difference is probably due to the fact that Christian mysticism which leads to ecstasy is not merely union with the Spirit of the universe—the absolute self-existent One, ‘I am that I am’—but union with a God who has become incarnate, and is actively energizing in the phenomenal. Mystic union with the Eternal is not confined to any one form of the Christian religion. We find it among the peasants of Presbyterian Scotland and the revivalists of Nonconformist sects in Wales, as well as among Catholics. It is the privilege of all who are trained in the habit of prayer, of recollection of God’s presence and of worship. But those who know God in the burning bush of the Blessed Sacrament, on fire yet unconsumed, in which, at a certain point in time and space, God’s presence is vividly realized, when the Son of God is incarnate in the blessed Sacrament of His most holy Body and most precious Blood, find this the occasion when ecstasy comes most readily. For then the two worlds most intimately penetrate one another, when every barrier of time and space fades away, when the soul is caught up on to the plane of the eternal and

for a time transcends the mechanism of the phenomenal, when God uplifts us into union with Himself that we may dwell in Him and He in us. At such a time it is most possible to 'stand outside' ourselves, and see all things as God sees them, in visions which cannot be uttered, for they refuse to submit to the narrowing limitations of thoughts and words.

It would be beside our purpose to make any attempt to investigate the full experience of the mystic, the dark night of the soul, the mystery of pain, the ecstasy of joy and harmony. We only mention ecstasy as a protest against that utterly unscientific attitude of many scientific men who profess to study man's experience and then rule out as invalid the most real and vivid of those experiences because it will not submit to their little narrow methods of investigation. A scheme which treats pork chops and indigestion as real, and mystic vision as unreal, may be a science fit for swine; but it does not adequately cover the experience of men.

Our experience embraces the appreciation of beauty, the insight of the poet, the self-sacrifice of the hero, the inspiration of the saint, and the exaltation of the love of God. And the sacramental principle, that spirit is expressing itself in the material, alone seems to give an adequate interpretation of the universe.

So, in thinking about the universe and man's nature, neither the merely mechanical nor the merely spiritual interpretation can satisfy us; while the sacramental interpretation seems to harmonize what is true in both these interpretations. Whatever may be the ultimate nature of things, whether matter be eternal or temporal, the 'light unapproachable' in which God dwells from all eternity, or a temporary precipitation of spirit, no one can say. For God has given no revelation on that point, and the constitution of man's brain seems unfitted for dealing with ultimates.

We know only in the region of the phenomenal. 'Knowledge is of things we see.' Before things enter the region of the phenomenal we know them only by faith. We believe, we do not know. This applies to things material as well as things spiritual. The scientist has no knowledge at all of ether until a strain occurs in it—that is, until it enters the region of the phenomenal. Faith is not an inferior kind of knowledge as some seem to think. It is an activity of the whole personality, which alone makes knowledge possible. The scientist cannot even begin to work until he has made four acts of faith. He must believe what he cannot prove. First, that there is a world external to himself which is not merely the creation of his

own mind. Secondly, that he is a reasonable being. (This may seem an easy act of faith until we remember that every lunatic believes the same about himself.) Thirdly, he must believe that his senses give him a true report of the world outside his mind. And fourthly, he must believe that there is such a thing as truth and reason. Faith, either in scientists or theologians, is a daring adventure of a soul which has the courage to launch out into the unseen. It is an act of the whole personality, heart and mind and will. But it is a reasonable act, an adventure which justifies itself by experiment. It is the essential basis of all right thinking in man, because God is not mere abstract thought. God is love : and love is energy which must realize itself in activity. So far from faith being in any way inferior to knowledge, it is manifest that it is as much superior to it as the soul is to the body. For, as we have seen, an act of faith is the essential preliminary to all knowing. Knowledge is only the analysis of some parts of our experience, an analysis which is most imperfect. If we examine the scientific books of thirty years ago, we shall realize how small a percentage of the knowledge of one age survives a generation of thinking : and we shall marvel at the blindness of those who are trying to accommodate the Catholic Faith to the supposed demands of 'the modern

mind.' For each age has seen the modern mind of the age before almost entirely discredited, while the fundamental verities of the Catholic Faith march down the ages in undiminished power, splendour, and validity.

CHAPTER III

THE WORLD—A SACRAMENT

JUST as physical science, before it can get to work, has to postulate certain fundamental existences, whose nature it cannot explain, whose existence it cannot prove, but which justify themselves in experience—so religion postulates three fundamental existences, which rest on a similar act of faith to that of the scientist. We begin to think about religion with the three postulates—self, the world, and God. And we notice at once that man is a sacrament, a being of two worlds, who moves at the same time on two planes of existence, by reason of his body belonging to the world of the finite, the temporal, the phenomenal, the world of time and space, of 'here' and 'there' and 'now' and 'then'; by reason of his soul belonging to the sphere of the infinite and eternal.

It is not necessary to believe that God made the world out of nothing. It is possible that the universe, as we think we see it, is a precipitation

of that light unapproachable in which God dwelt from all eternity, and that the universe is, in the phrase of S. Athanasius, 'the Body of God.'

Perhaps the most convenient way of thinking of the universe is under the form of two pictures which, if combined together, may help us to think aright.

In the first place, think of a man in a dark room, in which the darkness is cloven asunder by one ray of light which comes in through a hole in the shutter. In that ray of light we see ten thousand specks in ceaseless motion, which issue from a sphere of darkness into a sphere of light, become for a moment apparent, and pass again into the darkness.

So all things seem to exist in the world of wills, and pass for a time through the world of phenomena, become apparent, and pass again into the world of wills.

But since this picture may suggest that the world of phenomena is the true world of light, it is necessary to correct it by another picture.

A man walking across a sunlit country enters a railway tunnel, and for a time his world is confined and dark, lit only by the little lamp of science which he holds in his hand, and which feebly illuminates a few steps of his way. After a few moments of mortal life in the darkness and confinement of the tunnel he issues again into the infinite freedom of

the world of light. So the human spirit passes from the world of wills through the dark tunnel of the world of phenomena, and issues again into the full freedom and glory of the world of wills, the rich world of uncreated light, and of that 'life which is life indeed.'

We may then first contemplate the sacramental principle in the very being of God, 'who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power eternal. Amen.'¹

We pass on from the thought of the uncreated majesty of God to see the eternal Spirit expressing Himself in the material universe. God is not to be identified with His creation, as in pantheistic systems. He is infinitely above it while He is everywhere in it, or rather it is in Him. God is transcendent and immanent. But He expresses Himself in and through His creation, and the universe becomes sacramental: as we read, 'the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.'² We watch the formless ether being woven up into countless forms, from the whirling gas of the nebulae to the brain of man; from the unconscious, through the conscious, to the self-conscious; from the determinate,

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 15-16.

² Gen. i. 2.

through the indeterminate, to the self-determinate ; till that brain has been formed which is capable of being the organ of a mind, and that body has been fashioned which is fit to become the instrument of the soul.

It is a fascinating study, but it does not belong to our immediate purpose to trace this wondrous upward movement from the rock to the brain of man, to see the ceaseless strain and conflict of the anabolic and the katabolic tendencies, the force which restlessly pushes upward, and the tendency to run down : to note that when anything ceases to strive upward, and, content with its state, strikes an equilibrium with its environment, it gets side-tracked from the main stream of progress and left behind : to mark how pain is the very principle of progress, and how all organic evolution is the response of a living force to the stimulation of its environment : to see this blind upward movement becoming conscious as dissatisfaction, a restless unformulated desire, and this restlessness passing upward from desire to appetite, from appetite to lust, from lust to love, until the groaning of creation becomes articulate in man, and the passion of the universe bursts forth in yearning aspiration : ‘ My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God ; when shall I come to appear before the presence of God ? ’

But while we may not trace the process of evolution, we may gather from its history these points which bear on our subject. Man is always and everywhere a response to stimulus, and this stimulus comes to him from his environment. The eye does not create the light. The light plays on those cells which are most sensitive to its influence until they become the eye. The lungs do not create the air; they respond to it. The mind does not create the truth; it recognizes it joyfully and responds to it loyally. The soul does not create God, but awakens in His likeness and is satisfied, a son at home with his Father. 'And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.'¹ 'And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.'² And here we note the first point about the sacramental principle. Man is a response to stimulus, and that stimulus comes to him at first through the material universe: 'first... that which is natural, then that which is spiritual.'³ Before the dawn of thought, man is a mysterious bundle of possibilities dominated by one desire—the will to live. His environment educates him by stimulation, and, as he responds to the stimulations of the external world, he awakens to a larger life. We can distinguish two distinct

¹ Gen. i. 26.² Gen. ii. 7.³ 1 Cor. xv. 46.

stages in the evolution of life. At first life moves upward by pressure from below, by fear of death : after a certain point it moves upward by attraction from above, by love of life. The fox learns his cunning, and the tiger his spring, and the antelope his swiftness, under the impulse of the fear of death. If he does not attain, he perishes. But the saint does not consecrate himself to the love of goodness, nor the artist to beauty, nor the scholar to truth, for fear of death, but from love of life. Each has caught a glimpse of the heavenly vision, a ray of that light which burns in the heart of God, the good and beautiful and true, and his heart leaps upward in response to the heavenly vision, no longer driven upward by fear, but now drawn upward by love.

It is not meant to imply that these two motives exclude each other. It is a matter of emphasis, of dominant motive. The tiger may find as much pleasure in the pursuit of his prey as many a fox-hunting squire finds in riding after a little fox till they are both very much out of breath : the antelope may find as much æsthetic joy in the grace and rhythm of movement as a lady does at a dance : a fox may have as much pleasure in accomplishing his end as a party politician does in a successful division. On the other hand the saint knows something of the fear of hell as well as the love

of heaven. The artist does not produce his best work until he has known what it is to suffer. The scholar has to learn to 'take pains' before he can express his little glimpse of truth. All that we wish to express by drawing attention to these two stages in the evolution of life is that God uses both love and fear, pleasure and pain, in the education of man—that is, in drawing out and developing his faculties through the stimulation of his environment. The fear of death leads man to multiply his strength by the use of weapons so that the flint arrow with which the cave-dweller fought the mammoth develops into the torpedo. The bitter cold educates him to the use of clothes. The need of co-operation leads to the development of language until the grunt of dissatisfaction or the growl of wrath has made possible the poet's song.

In all this we can detect two ways in which God uses the sacramental principle in the universe to awaken and educate the soul of man—the stimulation of pain, and the attraction of pleasure, fear, and love, Calvary and the Risen Life as they are for ever gathered up in the holy Sacrifice and the blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

So man awakens to realize that there is an external world, and becomes conscious, beholding the tree which is 'good for food' and 'a delight to

the eyes' and 'to be desired to make one wise.'¹ Then his thoughts turn from the contemplation of the external world to consider himself, and he becomes self-conscious. And within himself he finds something which is not himself, a law or instinct of right and wrong, a command and a prohibition, which begin by warning him against what will harm his life and hinder his end. And when he fails to obey this inspiration it rebukes his disobedience, and he hears 'the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden,'² and he knows himself a moral being. The same blush which confesses his fall proclaims also his greatness. For the acknowledgment that he has fallen short of his ideal is a confession that he has seen the heavenly vision, and is a spiritual being. The pain of penitence is the principle of progress, and the confession of sin is the proclamation of freedom in the spiritual life.

When man has become self-conscious and reflective he becomes also God-conscious, and inspiration has become possible as the mind of man responds to the mind of the Eternal. And in the Bible we find the gradual revelation, the unveiling of the heart and mind and will of God.

Here it may be worth while to note the difficulty which arises in some minds over the waste and failure which seem to mark the process of

¹ Gen. iii. 6.

² Gen. iii. 8.

evolution, so much squandering of life, so many apparently useless or harmful types created before the creation of man is accomplished. This difficulty seems to arise from an entirely false estimate of man's power to judge in such a matter. We may be able to trace a thread of purpose through a bewildering mass of things which we do not understand. But we are quite unable to say that anything is waste or useless until we know exhaustively the whole mind and purpose of God. And we cannot criticize His method of creation until we know exhaustively the nature and necessities of His Being.

The world of spirits may contain countless hosts of spiritual beings of every grade of personality besides the spirit of man and the Holy Spirit of God. But an impoverished Protestantism has so neglected the teaching of the Church on the ministry of angels and the communion of saints that men often think of the spiritual life as a discordant duet between the Spirit of God and man. The Catholic vision of God beholds Him surrounded by* a countless host of spiritual beings, angels and archangels, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, cherubim and seraphim. And as personality stretches upward through all these grades of life, so it may stretch downward to the tiniest amœba. God uses man to guide and direct the course of evolution as we see

it to-day. Man, within the operation of what are called laws of nature, is able to modify the rest of nature in a thousand ways, to change climates, to eliminate some species and develop others, to choose whether he will have cart-horses or race-horses, bulldogs or turnspits. So we cannot tell to what extent God may have created and modified the universe by the agency of innumerable species of spiritual agents, whose mistakes may be registered in the world's history.

Dr. Alfred Wallace, who, with Darwin, first drew attention to the process of evolution by means of natural selection, thus comments on creation in his attractive book 'The World of Life.'¹

'If, as I here suggest, the whole purport of the material universe (our universe) is the development of spiritual beings who, in the infinite variety of their natures—what we term their characters—shall to some extent reflect that infinite variety of the whole inorganic and organic worlds through which they have been developed; and if we further suppose (as we must suppose if we owe our existence to Deity) that such variety of character could have been produced in no other way; then we may reasonably suppose that there may have been a vast system of co-operation of such grades of being, from a very high grade of power and intelligence down to those

¹ P. 393.

unconscious or almost unconscious "cell-souls" posited by Haeckel, and which, I quite admit, seem to be essential coadjutors in the process of life-development.

'Now granting all this, and granting, further, that each grade of being would be, for such a purpose as this, supreme over all beings of lower grade, who would carry out their orders or ideas with the most delightful and intelligent obedience; I can imagine the supreme, the Infinite Being, foreseeing and determining the broad outlines of a universe which would, in due course and with efficient guidance, produce the required result. He might, for instance, impress a sufficient number of his highest angels to create by their will-power the primal universe of ether, with all those inherent properties and forces necessary for what was to follow. Using this as a vehicle, the next subordinate association of angels would so act upon the ether as to develop from it, in suitable masses and at suitable distances, the various elements of matter, which, under the influences of such laws and forces as gravitation, heat, and electricity, would thenceforth begin to form those vast systems of *nebulæ* and suns which constitute our stellar universe.

'Then we may imagine these hosts of angels, to whom a thousand years are as one day, watching the development of this vast system of suns and

planets until some one or more of them combined in itself all those conditions of size, of elementary constitution, of atmosphere, of mass of water and requisite distances from its source of heat, as to ensure such a given minimum of millions of years or of ages as would be required for the full development of a life-world from amœba to man, with a surplus of a few hundred millions for his adequate development.'

This speculation is not quoted with approval. It is only given as a welcome evidence that one man of science has sufficient imagination to allow for the possibility that other agents may be at work in the world, besides those with which we are able scientifically to deal.

CHAPTER IV

THE BURNING BUSH

So far we have thought of the sacramental principle in the universe as a process of stimulation by which the Spirit of God educates or draws out the powers of man's nature. We must pass on now to see how the Spirit of God and man use the material universe as a means of self-revelation and inter-communion.

Matter is non-moral, that is to say, in itself it is neither good nor bad. But it may be used by spirit for either good or evil purposes. And it seems that God so uses the universe as to reveal something of His power and glory to those who have the power of spiritual discernment, eyes to see and ears to hear. From Egypt, India, Persia, in writings older than our Bible, by poet, mystic, and philosopher, in every age and of every race, the truth of S. Paul's words is vindicated: 'the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even

his everlasting power and divinity.’¹ And this perception that Spirit is moving behind the thin veil of the material universe leaps upward into full conscious expression among the Hebrews.

‘The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work.’

‘Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.’²

‘Thou deckest thyself with light as it were with a garment, and spreadest out the heavens like a curtain.’

‘O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches.’³

But this vague sense of an all-pervading Spirit moving behind the veil of nature became more personal when it was gathered up to a point and localized in some special vision or dream granted to some man of God. It has been well said: ‘God is everywhere. But unless you find Him somewhere you will find Him nowhere.’

Man becomes aware of God in two ways—by intuition and by reasoning. God may be known immediately by experience, by instinct, by mystic vision, by that blending of spirit with spirit which we call sympathy, and which develops into the

¹ Rom. i. 20. See Illingworth’s *Divine Immanence*, p. 14.

² Ps. xix. 1, 2.

³ Ps. civ. 2, 24.

perfect union of love. But this immediate union of the human spirit with the divine is an experience which cannot be communicated to others until it has passed through a process of that analysis and reflection by which alone we become rational creatures and are able to communicate our thoughts to other creatures. The process of reflection on experience we call reasoning. Apparently these two methods are operative in all knowing. We perceive and we think. According to Bergson the animal creation has followed the line of instinct and intuition, and man has followed the line of intelligence and reasoning. It seems probable that man can only learn the truth of the whole by mystic vision, and that he can only communicate this experience to others by reducing it to processes of thinking which enable him to formulate it in words. It would be a mistake to undervalue either method, and the scholar who undervalues mystic vision and the mystic who pours scorn on intellectual methods are both impoverishing their power of knowing God. So we find God speaking to man in vision and in voice, revealing Himself to immediate perception and to reflection until the meaning of a vision burns up into a flame of prophetic conviction which enables the man of God to deliver his message with all the force of a divine imperative. It is probably this necessity of using the analytical processes of the

brain if we are to be rational creatures which accounts for the use of the sacramental method in divine revelation.

God appears and speaks to Abraham at certain times and in certain places. The vague atmospheric sense of His presence becomes localized and flares up into a definite flame in certain men who have not blunted their spiritual perceptions. He holds communion with Jacob in a dream, and 'Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.'¹

God speaks to Moses on the Mount of Horeb from the burning bush: 'and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. . . . And God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses,' and revealed to His prophet the sympathy of God who had 'seen' the affliction of His people and 'heard their cry' and 'knew their sorrows' and was at hand to deliver them. And the revelation was crowned by the unveiling of the Absolute, which is the basis of all right thinking: 'I am that I am.'²

The burning bush which was on fire and yet

¹ See Gen. xxviii. 10-18.

² See Exod. iii. 2-14.

not consumed may be taken as the type of the sacramental principle in the universe. From the cold, passionless message of the stars to the burning brain of man the Spirit of God is using matter as the medium through which He communicates Himself to man. And we note further points of the sacramental method. Matter is no longer merely used to stimulate man's faculties into activity. It is used now to concentrate man's attention on a certain point in space and time, and to satisfy those activities which have been awakened by the communion of God with man.

Having seen how God uses matter as the vehicle of spirit, we pass on to note that man makes the material universe a means for spiritual expression.

You may go to any of the wireless telegraphy stations and, adjusting the headpiece to your ears, you will hear long and short waves of sound beating on the ear. One of two possible points of view may be adopted. It is possible to say 'I am only listening to the rhythmic throbbing of a vast eternal machine which works its way in an eternal cycle from chaos to cosmos and back again to chaos. There is no purpose or meaning, no direction. Only ether, electricity, and energy.'

On the other hand it is possible to note the evidence, to record the intervals, to correlate and compare and think, until we find that another

mind is trying to communicate with our mind, another will pleading for the co-operation of our will, another heart revealing itself to our heart. Personality is energizing in the material universe and making matter a vehicle of mind. To-night, perhaps, the dread signal SOS will beat upon the ear, and the cold, lifeless ether becomes aflame with thought, on fire with passion, throbbing with the hopes and fears and passion of men—a burning bush on fire, but unconsumed, in which the tragedy and passion of the world is being recorded as spirit speaks to spirit all round the world. The heavens which declare the glory of God are now revealing the needs of man, and ‘day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.’

Again, go down to the seashore where the sand lies smooth, and meditate on the immutability of the laws of nature, of gravitation, and the conservation of energy which govern the ceaseless play of forces, the age-long cycle of friction which ground the rock to powder, and will build it up again into rock. But personality energizes in the material universe, and uses matter as the vehicle of mind. A man comes down to the seashore, and with his walking stick writes in the sand ‘God is love,’ and, later on, another reads it and his whole life, perhaps even the history of the world, is changed. Now, what has the writer done? He has trans-

gressed no law of nature. He has neither added anything to nor taken anything from the material world. The machine grinds on as before. All that he has done is to rearrange some grains of sand. But now the sand has become a burning bush on fire with thought, yet unconsumed. It is the ceaseless miracle of personality acting on matter, and using it as a sacrament by which spirit may hold communion with spirit.

Stand by this loom at Bolton in Lancashire. Matter and force, ether and energy will explain much, right up to the brain of the operative. A card pierced with a thousand holes is put into the machine, the shuttle moves backward and forward, the wheels whirl, the threads mingle in an ordered sequence, the cloth is woven, the pattern begins to grow, here a little and there a little. Now you may trace one letter forming, then another, a crown, a royal monogram. It is the coronation robe of a king, or the flag of an empire ; and those threads of silk have now become a burning bush, shot through and through with a living flame of loyalty, on fire with patriotism, a symbol for which men will gladly die.

Heart and mind and will, created, guided, controlled, directed every movement of that machine to the fulfilment of a predestined end.

And as we study the mechanism of nature, may

we not find in it the weaving of a web and the forming of a pattern, which reveals something of the mind of God? In the words of Sir O. Lodge, President of the British Association: 'We are deaf and blind to the immanent grandeur around us unless we have insight enough to appreciate the whole, and to recognize in this woven fabric of existence, flowing steadily from the loom in an infinite progress toward perfection, the evergrowing garment of a transcendent God.'

And in contact with nature the wounded spirit often finds its healing: 'If I may but touch the hem of His garment I shall be whole.'

THE SACRAMENTAL PRINCIPLE IN MAN

CHAPTER V

MAN—A SACRAMENT

As we have seen in a former chapter, scientific methods are imperfect and scientific conclusions unreliable because men of science work by a process of abstraction, and then too often their followers try to apply their conclusions to the whole.

In devoting a lifetime to the study of one nerve in the leg of a frog it is necessary to make an abstraction, to fasten the attention on this nerve, and more or less to ignore the frog's family relations, his outlook in the world, his politics and social habits, his affections and emotions, his æsthetic tastes in music, and so on. It is the sin of the camp-followers of science to take the conclusions arrived at by this legitimate process of abstraction and apply them to the whole life of the frog, and by an easy transition to transfer the result to the life of man.

So in tracing the sacramental principle in man

we must beware of laying too much stress on the most useful contribution of each separate science, remembering that they are abstractions which must be studied in their relation to the whole.

We may consider five abstractions.

The rifleman sees man in one dimension as merely an object of aim, a speck on the sky-line, a splash of colour on a background, a target. The chemist sees him as a mass of chemicals, about 140 lb. weight of carbon, phosphorus, lime, and water—chemicals woven up into a living unity by some unknown force called life. He used to try to persuade us that all that is needed to improve the life of man is a slight alteration in his chemical composition: a tot of rum will make a soldier brave, an ounce of phosphorus will make the stupid wise, and a dose of bromide will bring sleep to the wakeful. So we used to be told that all life may be explained in terms of physics and chemistry, and how, by reaction to stimulus, the pencil produces the artist and the poet, and the organ produces the musician, and the engine gradually—by the inevitable upward process of evolution—produced the engineer!

But later science has become more modest under the criticism of philosophy, and now is content to say that we do not know, and cannot think, how a thought can be registered in a speck of protoplasm,

or a syllogism store itself in a cell. When Haeckel is driven to account for consciousness, by a courageous speculation he invents his 'cell-souls' and tells us that 'the two fundamental forms of substance, ponderable matter and ether, are not dead and only moved by external force, but they are endowed with sensation and will (although naturally of the lowest grade): they experience an inclination for condensation, a dislike for strain; they strive after one, and struggle against the other.' This is, of course, not a scientific conclusion, but a wild anthropomorphic speculation. But it is a distinct advance on the old materialism and an approach to the realization of the probable truth that the world is not a machine but the body of a person.

Then histology—the science of the tissues—tells us that man is a bundle of thousands of miles of nerves and blood vessels and muscles: that if all the telegraph wires and railway lines in the world were thrown together and worked as one system they would not compare in number and complexity with the cells which are packed together with their food supply and drainage apparatus, and the connecting tissues which hold them all in their places, within the space of a single human skull. It reveals to us the mechanism of a blow, the contraction and expansion of the muscles: but it tells us nothing of the passion or pride, the fierce

leap of anger or of wounded honour which caused the blow. It explains the mechanism of a blush, and shows us the chambers of the heart contracting and the capillaries expanding : but it knows nothing of the thought of shame which call the blush to the cheek.

Or again, from cytology—the science of the cells—we learn that man is a collection of thousands of millions of tiny little cells, each one of which has a rudimentary mind and an independent life of its own. Three thousand million of these cells are in the brain pan of a man of average intelligence, and each cell has its special function to perform in the common life of the whole. These subordinate sciences of chemistry, histology, and cytology are gathered up into a unity in physiology, which gives us the physical basis of consciousness, and treats man as an animal. And upon this physical basis is founded the rapidly developing science of psychology which analyses the action and reaction of the mind upon the brain, of consciousness upon the physical basis which helps it to self-realization, self-development, and self-expression.

It is strange to find men discussing the possible ' ageing of the mind ' because they notice that after a time the brain fails to answer to the calls upon it, and the aged sometimes fail in memory and wander in speech.

A musician, stung with an immortal thought, may have no instrument by which to give expression to his inspiration, or the organ at his disposal may be defective and will certainly in time wear out. But because after a time the organ will not respond to the musician's touch—bellows worn out, pipes choked, many notes dumb, others out of tune—no one imagines that this implies that the musician is failing.

Psychology presents us with the most fascinating abstraction of all the partial views of man and his nature, introducing us to the mysteries of perception, cognition, conception, conation, sense-association, and so on. It is the highest point up to which we can analyse the manifestation of the Ego. Nothing higher can be attained by the process of analysis. The mystic vision of the whole alone remains for the full realization of man's nature, and this can only manifest itself to others by entering the domain of psychology.

Perhaps the difference between the intellectual processes of reasoning and the intuitions of mystic vision may be illustrated in this way.

During the Boer War I have seen a man in a signal-box on a railway on a stormy night at Machadodorp in South Africa. He looked out of the windows of the signal-cabin, but nothing could be seen, and yet he knew much that was going on in

the world. For along innumerable wires, which answer to our nerves, messages were flashed which registered themselves upon the receiving instrument which corresponds to our brain. He, the telegraphist, who is the mind, notes these messages, interprets the dots and dashes which the regulated activities of electricity bring along the wires to his receiver. He notes, associates, correlates, compares, and corrects the news which is ever flowing in. He gradually forms a picture, more or less correct, of the world outside his cabin. He may even be tempted to take a mechanical view of the world, for, when he pulls a lever, a train dashes by, and if he is sufficiently unintelligent he may confuse antecedent and consequent with cause and effect, and believe that the pull on the lever is the cause of the passing of the train.

But other forces are at work besides those which move along his wire, and other means of knowing may be possible for him besides those for which his receiving instrument can register. In one flashing moment the external world is revealed to him quivering with light, and he sees troops on the march, and food convoys, and mountains, rivers, and trees. In the next moment all is plunged into darkness and he is thrown off his stool, and his receiving instrument is fused by the lightning which ran along the wires, a force of electricity

too great for its capacity. So in mystic vision the whole is for a moment apprehended. So in many cases mystics are neurotic because the vision overstrains the nervous apparatus which was constructed for the lesser revelations of normal sensation. But the vision of the whole need not come only in the flash of occasional revelation. The sun arises, and the man, if he looks up from the instrument, may now see the external world bathed in light.

So mystics by love may gaze upon the heavenly vision, and, by loving union with the heart and mind and will of God, may see life as God sees it.

And so we pass from the unconscious to the conscious, and from the conscious to the self-conscious, until we arrive at man in the fullness of his personality, not only a self-conscious, reflective being, but one who is God-conscious—capable of being dominated by ideals, and obedient to the heavenly vision.

Perhaps the best thought on the absolute transcendence of the Spirit may be summed up in these words: 'The spiritual appears out of the absolutely transcendental, associates itself with corporeal processes, determines these and is determined by them, and in its own time passes back from this world of appearances to the transcendental again.' ¹

¹ Otto, p. 358.

'It is true that the "soul" does not spring up ready made in the developing body, lying dormant in it, and only requiring to waken up gradually. It really becomes. But the becoming is a self-realization. It is not true that it is put together bit by bit by experience, so that a different being might develop if experience were different. It is undoubtedly dependent on experiences, impressions, and circumstances, and without these its development would be impossible. But these impressions act as a stimulus developing only what was previously inherent. They do not themselves create anything.' ¹

It is sometimes urged that man is merely the creation of his heredity and environment: that he inherits a nature which is knit up into the vast processes of humanity: that racial, national, and ancestral qualities, united with his environment, climate, country, mental and moral atmosphere, are the factors which absolutely determine what he will become: and that he has no freedom. Of course heredity and environment have a great effect on the process of his education. But it must be pointed out that if he inherits the bad qualities of his ancestors he also inherits their good qualities; and his freedom lies in his power to select from a vast inheritance which qualities

¹ Otto, p. 325.

shall develop. In the same way subjective selection enables him to decide which sections of his environment shall influence him and which shall not.

A wagonette of travellers is driving through the Trossacks. The environment is the same for all. But each chooses to attend to only one part of his surroundings. The botanist is absorbed in the study of the plants, and ignores the sunset. The geologist is so enthusiastic over the strata of the rocks that the plants pass unnoticed. The poet is wrapt in the mystery of the sunset, and pays no attention to the rocks and plants around him.

The philosopher finds it as impossible to prove the existence of consciousness, will, and mind as the scientists do to prove the existence of ether and energy. In each case they are ultimates which cannot be explained in any simpler terms because we do not know of any terms more simple. But if they cannot be known in their ultimate nature, they can be known in their activities. We understand what we mean by will when we contrast two states of mind—'distraction' and 'attention.' In 'distraction' the mind passively receives as many sensations, images, and ideas as may happen to arise. There is 'actually an uninhibited activity of the "lower course of thought," a disconnected

dreaming, a confused automatic movement of thoughts and feelings, according to purely associative laws. Then suddenly we pull ourselves together, rouse ourselves out of this state of distraction. Something new comes into the course of our thought. It is the will. Now there is control and definite guidance of our thoughts, and rejection of subsidiary association, ideas that thrust themselves upon us. Particular thoughts can be selected, particular feelings and mental contents kept in focus as long as we desire. In thus selecting and guiding ideas, in keeping them in mind or letting them go, we see the will in action.' ¹

But we must not try to divide our spiritual nature into will and mind and feeling. These are not separate and distinct departments or faculties, but varying activities of our personality.

The freedom of our will lies in the power of attention. We must, of course, act on our dominant desire which becomes our motive, the force which moves us. But amidst a multitude of desires we can choose to attend to one amongst them which then becomes dominant.

The influence of heredity and environment in educating (i.e. educing or drawing out) the powers of the timeless soul may be illustrated by a parable.

¹ Otto, p. 320.

Two sailor boys in separate boats are floating on the sunlit ocean. They land on two islands, which rise up above the level of the sea, each of them a peak of the same submarine range of mountains, which is knit into the general surface of the earth. One boy, finding that the fertile island satisfies all his needs, passes his time in idleness and leaves the island as undeveloped as when he arrived. He strikes an equilibrium with his environment and becomes stagnant. The other boy decides to work hard, and cultivates the soil and builds a house, and develops his character. He leaves the island a better inheritance for those who come after him, and he himself has acquired a strenuous character adorned with perseverance, industry, strength of will, and many other qualities.

The islands knit into the general constitution of the earth represent our bodies and all that we inherit from our ancestors—the racial, national, and family inheritance which qualify but do not destroy our freedom. The boys are souls which come from the sunlit ocean of God's love to life's opportunities, and pass back again into the transcendental—

When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again Home.

The fertility of the islands and the climate and

so on are the environment, and the choice of the boys represents our freedom to make the best of our opportunities or to neglect to do so: to attend or not to attend to the many and various stimulations which come to us from the external world. And the work of life is twofold—the cultivation and development of that part of our common human nature which we inherit from our ancestors and transmit to those who come after, and the formation of character which abides for eternity. This is the inner meaning of all we do and all we suffer—the formation of character by decisions of the will.

We have seen so far how God makes use of the sacramental principle in the universe, Personality energizing in matter, to educate personality in man. We have seen two uses of this principle: first, as a stimulus to call forth a response; secondly, as a localization to focus attention on a point in time and space. We have seen that this sacramental principle—spirit expressing itself in matter—is of the very essence of man's nature.

We must notice now how man uses this same principle in holding communion with other men. And this will add two more points to our conception of sacraments. It will show us the use of symbols and their social value; for without the use of this method social intercourse is impossible. The

word 'symbol' is here used in its original sense as a sign of something really present, not in its modern perversion as a sign of something absent. But here it may be useful to distinguish three manifestations of the use of symbols, which we may call (1) the natural; (2) the conventional; (3) the vital.

(1) A *natural* symbol may be seen in a tear. To the old-fashioned materialist a tear is only H_2O and sodium chloride, and any chemist will make some up while you wait. But to the spiritual man this same drop of water is shot through and through with the passion of the world, and gleams with the varying light of joy or sorrow, of penitence or praise, of passion or of pity. To the mechanist it means only the stimulation of the lachrymal glands into unusual activity so that they secrete more water than is necessary for their normal functions of moistening and cleansing the eye. But to the spiritual man the tear is often the sacrament of a wounded or a broken heart.

Or, again, a natural symbol may be seen in the expression of the countenance. How the same quantity of carbon, phosphorus, lime, and water can be woven up into two such contrasts as the face of a brutal criminal and the face of a loving saint, or how the same chemicals in the same face can be moulded in a moment to express most

contrary passions or emotions, despair or joy, hatred or love is hard to explain from a merely physiological point of view, allowing fully for the association of ideas, lines, movements, and memory. But from the sacramental point of view, face and form, the eye which kindles in love or wrath is a burning bush in which we can see the spirit flashing forth in flame, or moulding outlines to express spiritual ideas of selfishness, lust or cruelty, of sympathy, modesty or love. And this work of spiritual sculpture seems to lie, to some extent, in the nature of things, not entirely in the deliberate purpose of man. For while the soldier can discipline his emotions till the face becomes a mask which refuses to betray his feelings, the criminal and sensualist in many cases cannot avoid the brand which the degraded soul burns on the countenance. And so with virtues. The spirit within must shine forth at some times of highest exaltation, and on the mountain we have seen the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ as 'he was transfigured before them; and his face did shine as the sun, and his garments became white as the light.'¹ Beyond this natural sacrament of the moulding power of the soul over the body we may further trace the sacramental principle in many of man's activities. The picture is of course to the materialist only paint

¹ S. Matt. xvii. 2.

and canvas, and music can be reduced to calculable vibrations. But humanity is able to recognize something which distinguishes the artist from the mere painter, and the musician from the organ-grinder, as the picture or the oratorio becomes a burning bush which is on fire with spirit and which kindles a responsive flame in other souls. So man in all his activities reveals something of his soul in his work, and even interpenetrates his clothes, his room, his house with the character of his personality.

(2) *Conventional Symbols.* — Other expressions of the sacramental principle are dependent on conventional agreements. We agree that such a sound or such a mark shall stand for a certain idea. But there is no vital natural connection between the symbol and the idea. It is purely conventional, a matter of agreement. Among such conventional symbols we may class language, writing, arithmetical figures, and so on. But the sacramental principle is as well illustrated in these as in natural symbols. For again we find personality energizing in the material, spirit expressing itself in and through matter. Here is a chessboard, upon which the pieces still stand in a game half-played. It is, of course, only a piece of wood covered with black and white squares on which stand other little detached pieces of wood, black or white. But by

agreement or convention the minds of men have clothed these pieces of wood with certain ideas and given them certain laws which are to govern their movements and to regulate their warfare. The bishop, of course, is not really a bishop any more than he is the President of the Free Church Council. The knight is not really a knight, in fact bears no resemblance to a knight, as it is only a horse's head. But by agreement spirit has clothed these little bits of wood with certain powers and directs them with a definite purpose. This is the first conventional expression of mind in matter. But more remains. I know the game well, and as I gaze at the board I can perfectly reconstruct the past and with some uncertainty foretell the future. Two minds are revealed to me in the full play of all their faculties. As I study the present position and reconstruct the past moves I know what each has thought and feared and hoped and plotted and planned. I see where the analysis of one was imperfect, and so he lost a piece : where the other was so engrossed in the development of his own plot that he did not pay sufficient attention to the scheme his opponent was working out. These little pieces of wood are indeed as a burning bush on fire but not consumed, aflame with the thoughts and hopes and fears and passions and skill of man.

The orator begins with cold, calm reasoning,

clothing his thoughts in the symbol of tuneful words. The materialist sees in a word only the vibrations of the air. The mechanist will explain the way in which thought is stimulated by the sensations which convey to the brain the stimulations of the external world. The psychologist will analyse the process by which sensations and concepts are correlated and react on the brain. No one but the sacramentalist can tell us why the subtle sense of right and wrong, of justice and righteousness, of the love of truth or the hatred of falsehood can inflame the soul of the orator until he becomes a burning bush, and the cold, passionless atmosphere is on fire with wave after wave of spiritual flame which kindles a thousand souls to die for an idea.

The Puritan vainly boasts that he is purely spiritual, and allows no external means to come between his soul and God. He pours contempt on the sacramental system of the Church. But whence sprang his noble zeal for righteousness and his love for the living God, and for that Saviour in whom he has found the assurance of sins forgiven and of life redeemed? He pats his Bible. But what is this Bible? Black marks on white paper. The monkey eats it. The savage sees it, touches it, smells it, and throws it away. The sensualist is bored by it, and prefers the *Referee*. The historical critic prints it in blue and red, tells you

where it is right or wrong, and who did not write the various books. But to the humble Christian those black marks on white paper are a burning bush, aflame with the Spirit of God, on fire with the thought of patriarch and prophet, vibrating with the passion of apostles and saints, which, quivering across the centuries, awaken a response in soul after soul, who bear the sacred flame of the love of Jesus all down the ages, all round the world. And so in conventional symbols we see the sacramental principle at work, spirit expressing itself in matter in order that it may blend with other spirits. The mechanism of the pressure of the hand is merely a contraction of certain muscles ; but it may become a sacrament of friendship. A mother's kiss may seem to be only a contact of dust on dust, an affair of chemicals ; but it may be a burning bush, a sacrament of an immortal love, and through that outward touch of dust on dust two souls may flame up into an interpenetrating union which even death cannot sever.

And when the dust of our bread and wine has been caught up into union with the Divine Humanity of the Son of God and has become His most Holy Body and His most Precious Blood, in the blessed Sacrament of the altar, we may know the kiss of God, and that union with the Eternal which nothing but our sin can sever. ' For I am persuaded, that

neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' ¹

But before we can rise to the full conception of the Christian sacraments we must add another to those manifestations of the sacramental principle which we have already noticed. As stimulations, localizations, natural and conventional symbols, we have seen something of the use of this method in the intercourse between God and man: have noted it as the supreme necessity in all social intercourse of man with man. But man is not a pure spirit. He is a partnership of body and soul. And sacraments are more than material means for stimulating the spirit. They are also spiritual means for sanctifying the body.

(3) *Vital Symbols*.—There is one act in the life of man which gathers up in itself every aspect of the Christian sacraments and enables us to realize their living and life-giving nature. It is the act by which Holy Matrimony is consummated, and by which each one of us entered on our earthly life. It is a mistake frequently made by some scientists to trace birth back only to its physical beginning.

- For in truth each one of us is born of spiritual

¹ Rom. viii. 38-9.

desire—a desire which has been educated and refined from the blind impulse of the beast to the passion of a god. It is the sacramental principle in its loftiest manifestation, spirit expressing itself in matter, man made in the image of God, and calling into existence a little being which shall reproduce that image, and be capable of offering to his Creator a responsive love. The act that calls him into being is more than a sign or symbol, it is a creative act, a transmission of life. The life and the love of one for another is incarnate in a third; and father, mother, son, reflect the image of God, the ever-blessed Trinity for whom they were created. This incarnation of love in the new-born babe has been for ever hallowed for Christians as the most sublime of mysteries and loftiest expression of the sacramental principle. For the Son of God chose to enter into our human life through the sanctuary of the Virgin's womb, and drew from His holy mother that flesh which was to veil and reveal God. 'The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.' And in this Incarnation of the Eternal Word of God by which He uplifted our humanity into union with His Divine Person and presents it as a living sacrifice to the Father, we have the source and meaning and power of all Christian sacraments. For the sacraments are an extension of the Incarnation—the means by which He bestows Himself on us, and uplifts us

into union with Himself. They are not the mere stimulation of our human spirit to respond to the Divine Spirit. They are not a revival of the old life, but the bestowal of a new: not an evolution from within, but a birth from above. As in man the spiritual world interpenetrates the world of matter and the universe becomes self-conscious, articulate, and bursts forth in psalms of penitence and songs of praise: so in the sacraments the life of God interpenetrates the life of man. He dwells in us and we in Him, and, incorporating us into His Divine Humanity, He presents us to His Father and we are 'accepted' in the Beloved. 'I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one.' ¹

¹ S. John xvii. 23.

CHAPTER VI

THE INCARNATION AND THE CHURCH

1. *Inspiration*.—So far we have thought of man as an individual. But this is an abstraction which does not represent the truth. Man is fundamentally and essentially a social being.

His very life on earth comes to him from society. Before he is conceived in the womb others have conspired to give him birth. Before he awakens to conscious life he is surrounded with an atmosphere of desire and love and expectation. His eyes open on a world which is expecting him. He is not born merely into an atmosphere of nitrogen and oxygen. He is born into an atmosphere of thought and love.

The thought of God called him into being. The thoughts of parents surround his cradle. National, social, political, religious thought rush in upon him; and that venerable old nurse, the Modern Mind, who is always in an advanced stage of decay, suckles him with her own failing life.

Society equips him with language and ideas; and men of every land and every age surround him

with a clamorous demand for a hearing. The wonder is that the individual man can retain any remnant of freedom in his thinking. But free thought as also free will depends on the individual's selective power of attention. Born into a clamorous vocal world he has the power to choose to which voices he will attend. This inrush of other people's thoughts may be called 'influence,' the inflowing of another's life, which may be accidental or intentional. When the person deliberately intends it, it is called inspiration. Men of force of character or of subtlety of thought may inspire the child either by the word spoken or by the incarnation of thought in writings which enable men to speak across the ages to the newly opening mind. And, since men can thus communicate their thought to one another, it would indeed be strange if God were unable to inspire us.

We find that God's holy inspiration has never been wanting to man, though man's willingness to attend to His inspiration has often failed. History shows us that all down the ages men have arisen who are especially sensitive to the Holy Spirit's inspiration. As one writes :

For she that is the artificer of all things taught me,
even Wisdom.

For there is in her a spirit quick of understanding, holy,
Alone in kind, manifold,

Subtil, freely moving,
Clear in utterance, unpolluted,
Distinct, unharmed,
Loving what is good, keen, unhindered,
Beneficent, loving toward man,
Stedfast, sure, free from care,
All-powerful, all-surveying,
And penetrating through all spirits
That are quick of understanding, pure, most subtil :

For wisdom is more mobile than any motion ;
Yea, she pervadeth and penetrateth all things by reason
of her pureness.

For she is a breath of the power of God,
And a clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty ;
Therefore can nothing defiled find entrance into her.
For she is an effulgence from everlasting light,
And an unspotted mirror of the working of God,
And an image of his goodness.

And she, being one, hath power to do all things ;
And remaining in herself, reneweth all things :
And from generation to generation passing into holy
souls

She maketh men friends of God and prophets.¹

It was in this way that God chose Abraham, and the Israelites, and, separating them from the nations around, trained and educated them to know and do His will. When they fell away from Him into idolatry He raised up prophets to recall them to their destiny, until at last the time had come ; and the Blessed Virgin Mary gathered up in the

¹ Wisdom vii. 22-7i

perfect purity of her life and the perfect surrender of her will the vocation of her race, and became the mother of the Son of God. It would be, of course, impossible to deal fully with the wonderful mystery of the Incarnation in such a work as this. We propose only to touch on those points in which it illustrates the sacramental principle, and is the source and fountain-head of the Christian sacraments.

We may think of this glorious mystery in the first place under the method already suggested—in the terms of the two worlds. God is love: that is, He is an eternal Will to all goodness for all men.

God dwells from all eternity in the world of wills. In creation God begins to manifest Himself in the world of the phenomenal.

Christ is 'the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him were all things created in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist.' ¹

This cosmic Christ is 'the light which lighteth every man coming into the world.' ²

¹ Col. i. 15-16.

² S. John i. 9.

Thus from the beginning God was in every man, in the centre of his being, striving with him, educating him, illuminating him, guiding and directing him—the 'elan vital' of Bergson—the spring of progress which was ever stimulating man to win the freedom of the spiritual from the tyranny of the material and the mechanical. But there can be no love or freedom without the possibility of sin. And man sinned, so that the heavenly vision faded and the spiritual became imprisoned in the flesh. Man blinded by sin no longer saw the vision nor heard the voice of the Word of God who dwelt within him in the world of wills. This effect of sin may be observed any day in the individual. The child at home losing the joy and freedom of innocence by its first sin ; the boy at school blinded and wounded by sin and losing the heavenly vision, as the love of pleasure blinds him to many high ideals.

Man then by sin became selfish in his heart, weak in his will, blind in his mind. In his blindness he did not know what sin was costing the God who dwelt within him. At the Incarnation the God who had always dwelt within man came outside man and moved across the stage of history to show man what the God who dwells within him feels and endures, and how He suffers when men sin. In this way God enters fully into the world of the phenomenal, reveals Himself in and through these mechanical

processes of thought and word and deed, expresses Himself in history ; and then, His purpose accomplished, He withdraws again into the world of wills at the Ascension. But from henceforth man can never forget what sin is costing the God who unseen dwells within him. For he has seen it all expressed in terms of a human life.

But if the Incarnation had only brought a revelation of light without any bestowal of strength it would not have brought redemption to man. For sin not only blinds the mind, it also weakens the will ; and light without strength only fills us with despair. The most bitter experience of mankind is expressed in S. Paul's words : ' for to will is present with me ; but to do that which is good is not. For the good which I would I do not : but the evil which I would not, that I practise.' ¹

But the Church teaches no mere gospel of a good example which would have filled men with despair. She teaches the gospel of power from on high. ' Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.' ²

Christ brought us not only truth, the revelation of God's love, but also grace, the bestowal of God's life. He did not come merely as the revealer : He came as the regenerator. His redemption was not merely a manifestation : it was an incorporation. The Son of God became the Son of

¹ Rom. vii. 18-19.

² S. John i. 17.

man in order that the sons of men might become the sons of God. That which the Son of God accomplished in the Incarnation, 'the taking of the manhood into God,' He continues as a living process in His Church by the Holy Sacraments.

2. *The Church*.—No explanation entirely harmonizes all the texts in the Bible which refer to the Kingdom of Heaven and the Church. Whatever interpretation we take, some passages may be quoted against it. We must find some interpretation which must be in harmony with the mind and words and character of Christ. Many partial explanations have been given which either hardened the Church into a pharisaical sect, or evaporated it into an atmospheric inclination towards virtue. Perhaps the cruelty of the bigot and the sickly futility of the undenominationalist may be avoided if we think of the Church and the Kingdom in the term of the two worlds. And this method of thought seems to satisfy the two marks of Catholic Truth—a love which embraces all mankind, and a courage of conviction which can nerve martyrs to laugh at death.

The Kingdom of God is in the world of wills. The Church of God is the Kingdom in the world of phenomena. Of course these worlds are always interpenetrating one another, as are all kinds of 'worlds,' matter and spirit, body and soul, your

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personality and mine. There is 'an unceasing osmosis between appearance and reality.'

But for the purpose of thought we can distinguish without dividing them.

The Kingdom of God or of Heaven is obviously in the world of wills. The Kingdom is where God reigns over the will of man and is enthroned in his heart. It is a purely spiritual affair which cannot possibly come within the range of man's judgment; for man can only judge about that which is revealed in the phenomenal. In the world of wills God alone knows who are accepted with Him. Man cannot judge. Our general knowledge of God and His love may encourage us to hope that everyone who is true to the light he has and is eager to welcome further light will find some place in the Kingdom.

For if a man entirely surrenders his will to God, as far as He knows Him and His will, and loves Him with all his heart and mind and soul and strength, and his neighbour as himself, it is obvious that God *does* reign over that man, whatever theologians may say. If such a man is not in the Kingdom, the Kingdom is in him, which seems to come to much the same thing. We are not dogmatizing on the matter. We are only claiming that the world of wills lies in that large region of subjects on which a reverend Christian

agnosticism refuses to dogmatize, while it allows itself to cherish bright hopes.

Bishop King once wrote to me about the Athanasian Creed, saying: 'Remember God loves each soul more than you can love Him, and will do the best He can for each soul He has created.' This is the ground of Catholic optimism. Possibly in every religion in the world of wills there are souls, not saved *by* the faith they profess, but in spite of it, who, drawn by the unknown love of God, are acceptable to Him: men who, when their 'unfulfilled' probation is fulfilled in Paradise, will rank high in the Kingdom because they were true to the light they had and eager to welcome that further light and power which only our sloth and lukewarm love and lack of missionary zeal has withheld from them.

So the Catholic in the fullness of his love refuses to form an opinion, while he does not refuse to cherish a hope, about anyone in the world of wills, where knowledge cannot penetrate and dogma has no place. The pious Quaker, the good Moham-medan, the Hindu aflame with the desire for God, the patient Job, the wise men who flashed out of the darkness to make one act of worship at the manger-cradle of the Son of God and again withdrew into the darkness, those amongst the mixed multitude who listened to the words of eternal life

and tried to obey them—may we not hope that all such come within the embrace of Christ's own word of love: 'Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother' ? ¹

We do not suppose for a moment that they are saved without or apart from Christ.

We Catholics, it has been well said, believe that the Lord Jesus is the Way, and that there is no other way to the Father but by Him: that He is the Light that lightens every man who comes into the world; the Truth who is the source of all truth which the human soul is capable of receiving; the Life who is the author of all spiritual life in man by the power of His Spirit. There are thousands, we do not doubt, who walk in that Way, knowing neither its name nor whither it will lead them: who have caught the illumination of that Light, but cannot tell from what central fire it radiates: who have received the Truth in greater or less degree, but have not yet found the key to its interpretation: who have been nourished by that Life, but do not know whose life it is by which they live.

All this we hope in the world of wills.

In the world of phenomena the Catholic Church on earth is the army of the Kingdom of Heaven, and

¹ S. Mark iii. 35.

the colony of citizens of that Kingdom, who dwell as strangers and foreigners on the earth.

The British Army is part of the British Empire, called, chosen, and trained for a certain purpose : to protect the interests and establish the reign of our King. In the Boer War our army in South Africa was not the kingdom, but it was a functioning of the kingdom. Every soldier was a member of the kingdom. He obeyed the King, he was ready to lay down his life to establish the reign of the King. The army is a clearly defined body, organized for a special purpose. A special form of enlistment admits men to its ranks. When this enlistment has taken place, a man ceases to be a civilian and becomes a soldier. A soldier is expected to show certain virtues, obedience, courage, endurance, self-sacrifice, and loyalty to the King, and all his training is directed to the cultivation of these virtues. But he has no monopoly of these virtues, and many a civilian may be more courageous, more self-sacrificing, more passionately loyal to the King than any soldier. But this courage and loyalty does not make the civilian a soldier. He does not belong to the 'striking force' of the kingdom until he has enlisted. For the essential characteristic of the army is not some moral virtue which the soldier may share with the civilian, but a corporate life which enrolls a man in a certain body organized

for a certain purpose, and places him in a new relationship to his comrades, in a new relationship to his King, whose authority comes down to him through a regular hierarchy of officers ; places him, too, under different laws, the King's regulations, and demands from him duties which are not demanded of a civilian. And anyone who watches the effect of this corporate life on the moral and spiritual nature of a soldier, as he learns to realize himself in sacrificing himself for his regiment and his nation, can see what a change comes over a man as a result of incorporation into a common life and sharing a common ideal and obedience to a corporate discipline, and will understand that fellowship in a body, citizenship in a kingdom, is essential to salvation.

When the war broke out the Queen called for more soldiers, and thousands of young men leapt forward in answer to the call. But not one of them became a soldier in the army until he had been enlisted in a regular form. Then, enlisted, drilled, armed, clothed, and fed by the Queen, he became a member of the army, the 'striking force' which the Queen sent forth to establish her kingdom and extend her colonies in South Africa. The analogy between the army and the Church is, of course, imperfect, because one becomes a member of the army by voluntary enlistment, but one can

only become a member of the Church by sacramental birth of water and the Spirit. The Church is a family before it is an army.

But the analogy, I hope, is close enough to illustrate the point that the Church on earth is a clearly defined corporate body organized for the definite purpose of establishing the reign of God over the hearts of men. It is not coterminous with the Kingdom; but it is the 'striking force' for the establishment of the Kingdom, and the colony of that Kingdom on earth.

Our Lord came preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. To do this He took human nature into union with His Divine Person. He bore this human nature, body, soul and spirit, through life and death, unstained by sin and unshaken in its loyalty to the Father's will. He uplifted it, body, soul and spirit, from the grave, and, ascending, enthroned it in the Heart of God—the perfect Sacrifice by which the world is redeemed. This human nature, body, soul and spirit, is now spiritualized, caught up on to the spiritual plane, energizing in the world of wills. But He must have a body as clear-cut and definite as His Incarnate Body through which He may energize in the world of phenomena. So He founded His Church, and ordained the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, by which He might incorporate men into His Divine Humanity

by the new birth of water and the Spirit. This Church is in all literal truth His Body of which He is the Head, through which He teaches and acts, energizes in the phenomenal. Christ did not form a Psychical Research Society for the discovery of the truth, nor a debating society for the discussion of the truth, but a Body for the manifestation of the truth. For God is not merely abstract thought; He is energy. And the truth is not merely a mental conception; it is a Person. He cannot be revealed merely in a text-book; He can only be revealed in a life. Christ is not merely the illuminator; He is the strengthener. Not a lovely memory, but a living force. He came not only to redeem men's souls, but also their bodies. Therefore His redemption must be energizing, not merely in the world of wills, which could have been accomplished by divine telepathy, but also in the world of the phenomenal, which necessitated the Incarnation and its extension in the Church.

Perhaps we have lost some of the most fundamental truth about the Church by laying too much stress on individual, personal salvation as a final end instead of as a means to the redemption of the world. Our salvation is an individual experience. But it has more than an individual purpose. We are saved in order that we may save others, and we cannot be saved except in the fellowship of a

body. By incorporation into the Divine Humanity, the Body of Christ, the Holy Catholic Church, our sins are forgiven and the Atonement is accomplished in us. We are made 'at one' with Christ, and so with the Father: 'I in them, and thou in me.' That is the first movement. But it is not the last. The ultimate purpose is the formation of a body by which Christ to the end of time may energize in the world of phenomena.

The Church is not static but dynamic: a life-boat in which the crew risk their own lives in saving others, not a flotilla of uncollapsible canoes; not a ring-fenced preserve for the redeemed, but the Body of the Redeemer; not merely a home for the twice-born sons of God, but a camp of the army of the Lord of Hosts; not the Kingdom of Heaven in its consummation, but the 'striking force' for the establishment of the Kingdom, and a colony of that Kingdom.

By our baptism we are the elect of God. But we must beware of falling into the sin of the Jews. We must not mistake the purpose of our election. We are not elected to final destiny, but to opportunity; elected, not for our own sake, but for the sake of others; elected, not in such a way as to suggest that others must be lost, but in order that others may be saved. God's promise is always 'Yea,' never 'Nay.' When our Lord took a

human body, He came 'not to judge the world, but to save it,' 'to seek and to save that which is lost.' So when He incorporates us into that Body, His final end is not to guarantee salvation to those within, but to bring salvation to those without. And since it was formed as the means by which our Lord might energize in the phenomenal, might teach and act in the sphere of time and space, it cannot be a mere vague, atmospheric, amorphous soul of all men of good will which would be appropriate in the world of wills. The Church is not the soul of Christ, but His Body. So it must be clean cut, dogmatic, well defined, disciplined, knit together by social sacraments, bound in one by a common creed, by recognized officers, by official teaching, if the Body of Christ is to fulfil its mission as the striking force for the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven in the hearts of men. When Christ was on earth every particle of matter in the universe was either in His Body or not in it. So now every person in the world is in His Body the Church, or not in it. When the Son of God who created the universe was incarnate, it did not mean that His sustaining power was withdrawn from the rest of the universe. It simply meant that the God in whom the universe consists was energizing in the phenomenal at a special point with a special purpose. So now, when Christ uplifts us

into union with that Divine Humanity by incorporating us into His Body the Church, it does not mean that He is nowhere else in the world. In the world of wills He is still the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. In the world of phenomena He has chosen us to be the body through which He will redeem the world.

We have not to plan the world's redemption any more than an army has to plan the policy of the King. We have only to do what He tells us to do, to obey and to act. To Him alone belongs the duty of judgment. We only have to witness, to obey with enthusiastic loyalty the command He has given us. 'All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, unto the end of the world.'¹

So as we contemplate the two worlds—the world of wills and the world of phenomena—we learn how to unite the most perfect love with the strictest loyalty to our Church principles, and we may repeat the words of Deut. xxix. 29: 'The secret things belong unto the Lord our God. But the things that

¹ S. Matt. xxviii. 18-20.

are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever.'

3. *The Election*.—We have seen that the strong, clear-cut, definite Catholic doctrine of the Church, when it is considered in the terms of two worlds, does not in any way condemn 'those who are without' through no fault of their own. This point will become more clear when we consider the doctrine of election.

In the election God worked at first by the mechanism of natural inheritance—choosing a nation to be the shrine of His presence, Israelites, to whom were committed 'the oracles of God,' 'whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever.'¹

But it was the disaster of the Jews to mistake the nature of God's election. National pride hardened what was a Catholic duty into a racial privilege. The Jews mistook God's choice of their race for an election to final destiny, when it was really an election to opportunity.

They thought they were elected for their own sake, when in truth they were elected for the sake of others—to be the light-bearers of the world.

¹ Rom. iii. 2, ix. 4-5.

The principle by which God chooses some for the sake of all may be thus illustrated :

A man desires to capture and tame a herd of wild horses. If he made indiscriminate efforts to catch all at once, he would only waste his time and exhaust his strength. So he watches the herd until he has marked down one as the most spirited and swift ; and then with long-suffering patience he follows this one until he has lassoed it. He conquers its spirit, and by a long course of training teaches it to obey his will and co-operate with his plan. Then, mounted on this horse which he has trained, he issues forth to take captive those who have not yet come under his influence.

Thus God chose the Jewish nation, elected them, not to final destiny, but to opportunity ; not for their own sake, but for the sake of others. If they had been true to their calling the Jews would have been the missionaries of the world, bearing to all nations in their consecrated hearts the God who longed to embrace the world in the arms of His love. But, blinded by pride, they mistook the nature and purpose of their election, and, refusing to co-operate with God in the world's redemption, they failed to recognize the Messiah, and crucified the Son of God.

But while man may refuse to co-operate with God, God's purpose cannot be frustrated.

God gathers the faithful remnant in the Church, and reveals to them that the election is now Catholic—universal—open to all who have the will to respond. It is no longer merely racial, it is now individual. It is no longer by inheritance, but by subjective selection. It has passed from the mechanical to the spiritual, from law to freedom.

Many mistakes in theology might be avoided if persons realized that there are degrees in God's election—that His election may be general or special, racial or individual, universal or particular. Perhaps these points may be thus illustrated :

When war was declared in August 1914, England was the only country in Europe which had no conscript army. On the continent election to serve in the army was racial. Because a man had been born a member of the German or French nation he must be a soldier. In England the call to serve in the army was left to subjective selection—those who wished to serve could offer themselves. We had a volunteer army.

When a great peril threatened the nation, the King called for 500,000 more men to enlist. There is no conscription ; the election is still free. But the call has become more imperative : it is more widespread, for our nation is in peril, and every young, able-bodied man should offer his services. If the peril becomes more intense, the call will be

still further enlarged to embrace all the men in the nation who can bear arms or can perform other service in the hospital. All who are called ought to answer. Those who are wanted will be chosen. Many called, few chosen. But we hope it will still be free, left to subjective selection. For compulsion weakens an army by enrolling cowards who can never be a source of strength. But the method of free, subjective selection secures all who are worth having, and wins the highest development of the spirit ; while it leaves the cowards to explain as best they may their failure to respond to the nation's call.

And within this universal call we see a further free election. All good men are chosen and called to serve their nation. But some are allowed to enlist for home defence alone, and others for foreign service if necessary. And it is carefully explained that this distinction involves no reproach at all on those whose circumstances make it undesirable for them to go abroad. It is a free call which leaves the response to subjective selection. And within this degree of election we may discern other elections. Some will be chosen to be officers, others to serve in other ways, as in coal-mines which supply the Royal Navy with coal, others to work in the factory which provide arms or clothing or food for the fighting men. So, within the universal

election which calls all brave and good men to serve the community, we may detect a special election of individuals, a process pushed still further when from the fighting men the general calls for volunteers for a forlorn hope or some work of special danger.

Now these considerations give us a helpful analogy to the methods of God's election. Among the Jews we see a parallel to the conscript method, a nation mobilized to fight God's battles. But in this conscript army only the remnant was faithful. This remnant became the nucleus of the Catholic Church, in which the call is universal, but the response is left to subjective selection. All who are baptized are elected to opportunity, to know and do God's will, to receive the revelation of His love, to bear His Name and fight His battles. But within this general election there are degrees which are left to subjective selection, according to the intensity of our love and the nature of our circumstances. Some are called to be officers in the army of the Lord of Hosts, to bear the King's commission as bishops, priests or deacons; others to serve God at home or abroad in the mission-field; others to abandon every human tie and consecrate themselves to God's service in the perilous adventure of the Religious life. The urgency of the call depends, not on individual

inclination, but on the needs of God's army and His Kingdom. But no man must rest upon his election as though he were chosen for his own sake or his own merits. The Church exists as the agent through which our Lord energizes to redeem the world. We are God's elect by Holy Baptism. But our election is not to final destiny, but to opportunity—not for our own sake, but for the sake of others.

4. *The Body of Christ*.—Our Lord, in redeeming the world, did not write a book. As far as we know He wrote nothing at all. He formed a society of spirit-bearing men and women to be His Body through which He might energize in the phenomenal, might continue to teach and act; to be the instrument or agent of His self-revelation and self-bestowal through which He will work out the world's redemption.

Our Lord saves men, not merely by the manifestation of the Truth, but by the bestowal of the Life. In Holy Baptism He incorporates them into His redeemed human nature by a new birth. As S. Paul shows in 1 Cor. 12, there is a close analogy between a human body and the Church.

Our Bodies.—Recent science has taught us that our bodies are made up of thousands of millions of little cells, each of which has an independent life of its own with a rudimentary mind; all of

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which work together for the common good under the overruling of the spirit of man.

Points of analogy between the human body and the Body of Christ the Church are numerous. Having been incorporated into the body from its old surroundings and assimilated to its new environment, the cell is educated to fulfil its function in the human body by the process of digestion. So, in the Body of Christ, the Holy Spirit educates a soul till it can respond consciously to its environment, and then comes at Confirmation to dwell within it, and makes it an active, responsive part of the Body of the great High Priest. But the cells in every part of the body depend for their health and strength on the continual supply of certain vitalizing elements in the blood which circulate through the whole body. So each individual soul in the Body of Christ is continually nourished with our Lord's own life in the blessed Sacrament of the altar.

In every highly developed body there is a God-ordained differentiation of function, and in the process of nature each cell has its own place and duty to perform for the whole body. This is assigned to it, not by individual choice but by the dominant spirit. So in the Church each soul has its proper function assigned to it by the Holy Spirit, and the health of the Church depends on the zeal

with which each soul fulfils his function for the common life. If there is trouble in the Church, if the Body of Christ is failing to respond to His Spirit, it is because some souls are neglecting to fulfil their duty, or are self-assertive and depressing others. Now in this Body of Christ we see the loftiest expression of the sacramental principle, God in Christ, working upon the world for its redemption, using the lives of consecrated men as His means of self-expression in word and deed.

That which our Saviour began to do and teach in the human body of His Incarnation He continues to do and teach through His mystical Body, the Holy Catholic Church.

And as the Incarnation, the foundation sacrament, involved the union of the mechanical and spiritual, so we must reject those attempts to make an abstraction of either the mechanical or spiritual side of the Church's life.

We have in a former chapter seen that the scientific method can never arrive at the full truth because it works by the method of abstraction. At one period the medical profession missed the truth about man because it drew most of its knowledge from post-mortem analysis. Then, under the guidance of prophetic surgeons such as Sir Berkley Moynihan, it learned 'the pathology of the living'—learned to see each organ in its relation to the living

whole, to the whole man as a living being. It has yet much to learn of the action of the spirit of man upon the body before it can win its final victory and attain to the whole truth.

So in the Body of Christ it is thought by many that the Roman Church is too mechanical, makes little demand on the co-operation of the will, treats sacraments as magical in their operation, leads people to trust in outward forms to such an extent that they are in danger of neglecting the inward responses of the spirit ; is too static, not sufficiently dynamic, expects truth from the utterance of an infallible Head instead of from the experience of a living Body. It seems to many a vast machine which lacks spiritual vitality—a well-equipped, well-disciplined institution rather than a living and life-giving body ; a skilfully directed machine like the German army, not a free nation in arms.

On the other hand many Nonconformists lay such stress on individual spiritual experience that they imperil their hold on the Incarnation of the Son of God. They despise the outward form, the mechanical aspect of religion. But the Incarnation essentially involves an outward form, and it was of necessity mechanical when the Son of God walked upon the earth, placing one foot before the other, or spoke the words of eternal life, which would never have been heard if it had not been for measured vibration of

the atmosphere—an outward form. Their conception of a church as any common association of believers in Christ who unite for common worship and work is untrue to history. Christ first formed a corporate society, and believers were added to it by Holy Baptism.

The merely spiritual view of Christianity of the lofty, creedless, undogmatic mystic leads inevitably in the end to the loss of belief in the Incarnation, and to a failure to redeem the body of man and to consecrate the material universe.

It seems probable that those who wish to retain their belief in the Incarnation of the Son of God can only do so by a full appreciation of the sacramental principle by which the spiritual expresses itself in the material.

5. *Miracle*.—It would be impossible in this essay to deal fully with the subject of miracle. But we may note some points which may throw some light on the foundation miracle of the Resurrection and its companion miracle of the Virgin Birth, which give the appropriate entrance and exit of the Son of God in His manifestation in human life. These two miracles offend the prejudices of the materialists, who are obsessed by the scientific scheme of the Victorian age, which tried to reduce the world to a closed-in system of a mere machine. In fact, the Resurrection of our Lord's Body

from the tomb has been called 'the submerged rock,' which alone spoils the perfection of this scheme of things. It may be this indeed; but it is the 'Rock of Ages' which remains true and steadfast, while the frothy turbulence of the Modern Mind is for ever shattering itself against this fundamental fact of the Catholic Faith and passing into oblivion. The real question which lies at the centre of this controversy is whether the personal or the mechanical is the true method of interpretation of the universe. Let us notice these points.

What is the meaning of the word 'supernatural'?

The word has been so much misused that it is difficult to clear our minds of false interpretations. At one time we used to call supernatural any effect of which we did not know the cause, so that the supernatural was a constantly receding line between those things which we could explain and those things which we could not explain. The latter were looked upon as supernatural and miraculous.

A battle-ship attacks a village of savages, blinds them with its searchlight, blasts them with its shells, and blows them up with its torpedoes. At each new experience the savage cries, 'A miracle,' because it is an effect of which he does not understand the cause. But when we have shown him the mechanism of it all, he says, 'This is no

miracle ; it is due to natural causes.' This use of the word 'supernatural' as equivalent to 'inexplicable' imperils the whole conception of the supernatural. For with every increase of education we push forward the frontiers of the known and push back the forces of the unknown, the supernatural or inexplicable. So, when used in this sense, the idea of the supernatural is always losing credit. It is for ever being beaten, and has no chance of winning a victory unless man ceases to progress in knowledge.

It is on account of this misuse of the word 'supernatural' that the apostles of mechanism have been able to impose their strange illusion on so many minds. But if we define our terms more clearly, and say that miracle is an exceptional action of personality on the material world, we shall probably get nearer the truth. All action of personality is inexplicable. The mere action of lifting one's arm is a miracle in that sense. In lifting one's arm in the flash of a moment a thousand million cells have co-operated, millions of neurons have flashed the order, miles of nerves and muscles and tendons have done their share, and a thousand delicate leverages have been accomplished. It is a fore-shortening of mechanical processes which, if performed separately, would take many a week to accomplish. But the miracle we perform in lifting our arm is still better illustrated in one minute of

driving a motor-car. The chauffeur performs unceasing miracles as his personality dominates the mechanical, and co-ordinates a thousand natural processes in the flash of a moment. His consciousness sits in its office surrounded with the telephones, telegraph receivers and transmitters, typewriters and wireless apparatus, which we call the brain. It is having a 'stand easy' and languidly watching a stream of thoughts which flow by. But the house-door opens and the owner enters the car. At once the office of the chauffeur's consciousness—his brain—becomes a burning bush, on fire with the activity of his personality. As the car moves out of the garden into the road, through the gateway of his eye a thousand problems rush in, all clamorously demanding an immediate solution. Relativity of space, the position of a dozen other vehicles, the amount of space each occupies, the direction of each of the other vehicles, the pace at which each is travelling, the probable action of each of the twelve other drivers, with a marvellous psychical estimate of their various motives and intentions, the knowledge of the capacity of his machine for a spurt or a stop. The ear brings into his office the orders of the owner which have to be heard, contemplated, and remembered. His office is already crowded with emotions, some sitting quietly awaiting attention, others in a most explosive

condition, passionate and demanding immediate treatment—fear of losing the train, impatience at the stupidity or discourtesy of the driver on ahead, who *will* get needlessly in the way. Geography also claims his attention, the position of the station with a complete map of the streets leading to it, and a swift calculation of the probable relative crowding of five alternative routes. But in addition to this vast mass meeting of thoughts and feelings which crowd the office to suffocation, he must attend to all the necessities of action, and the telegraphic apparatus of the brain is working up to fusing heat issuing orders to the nerves and muscles, which regulate feet and fingers, which press and release levers, brakes, gear control, petrol regulator, and steering wheel. A miracle indeed! and the god who works it sits unconcerned at the wheel, lighting a fag, and thinking chiefly of the possibility of a day off and a walk out with his young lady. Now, wherever we have personality energizing in the phenomenal, we may say that we have miracle. We have something free, spontaneous, incalculable, which modifies the mechanism of the unconscious.

When the person is of unusual power of exceptional spiritual force, as in the case of some of the patriarchs, apostles or saints, we are not surprised if a heightened personality manifests itself by an exceptional influence upon nature and works miracles. If

God manifests Himself in human form we are face to face with personality at its highest and may expect to find the normal processes of nature fore-shortened, combined and modified in such a way as in the miracles of our Lord.

In the case of the Virgin Birth of our Lord, belief is made easier when we remember that both in the origin of life and in its many developments virgin birth occurs in many cases. In the matter of our Lord's Resurrection it is impossible to claim any scientific support sufficient to justify disbelief on scientific grounds. For science does not rule out an event because it is exceptional. Before the uplifting of our Lord's Body on to the spiritual plane can be pronounced scientifically impossible we should have to know many things of which we are absolutely ignorant. Science knows absolutely nothing of the ultimate nature of matter : it knows absolutely nothing of the ultimate nature of life : it knows absolutely nothing of the ultimate nature of that energy which weaves up the chemical particles into that living union which we call our body. True science will frankly say that we know absolutely nothing of these three ultimates on which a scientific opinion about our Lord's Resurrection must be based. So that, since science cannot form an opinion on the subject of its possibility, it is a question of probability and a matter of evidence.

Historical criticism recognizes as unchallenged the fact that the original witnesses and S. Paul did firmly believe that our Lord's Body did, as a matter of fact, rise from the tomb. Some Oxford and Cambridge professors to-day think that they were mistaken in this belief. We must choose between them. In making this choice we must note these points. First, on the general subject of miracles or any other event which happened nearly 1900 years ago, our individual opinion is necessarily worthless. All that historical science can do is to tell us what the original witnesses believed. And undoubtedly it tells us that they believed that Christ had risen, not as one among many ghosts, but uplifting His Body on to the plane of the spiritual. This belief of the original witnesses is incorporated in the Faith of the Church, and we accept it, not on any ground of our own opinion, which we have seen is necessarily worthless, but on the reasonable authority of the Church, the Spirit-bearing Body of Christ.

Secondly, historical science can tell us that this new manifestation of God's power had its appropriate effect in history. For no fact stands by itself. It is knit up into the woven web of history. And when we ask what had transformed the apparent disaster of Calvary into a triumph, what had transfigured the Cross from a blood-stained hangman's gibbet

into the symbol of an undying victory, what had changed a band of timid men into an army of martyrs, no answer seems sufficient but the truth of the Resurrection. But when students of historic science try to pervert the facts of history to make them fit in with the supposed necessities of a scientific view of the universe which is of doubtful validity and is already largely discredited, we must say that they are no longer pursuing the legitimate methods of their science

And we may note this defect which seems to discount the value of their opinions on matters which strictly lie outside their science. From the very nature of their specialization they have to work on ancient documents. They are students who have a highly abstract line of study, and of necessity are not in touch with the life of the million. They are absorbed in 'post-mortem' work on ancient documents. As we have pointed out, Sir Berkley Moynihan traces the defect of the earlier Victorian surgery to the fact that its conclusions were based chiefly on the knowledge gained by post-mortem examinations, and that such knowledge is necessarily defective because the student does not see the organ he is examining in living, sympathetic working with the whole. Sir Berkley Moynihan compares the pathology of the living with that of the dead. Knowledge gained

by post-mortem examination is imperfect, as the dead cannot tell of symptoms, etc. But surgeons working on the living body can learn the previous symptoms and the after-effect of their work.

This illustrates the most glaring defect of the methods pursued by professors at the university who apply the historical method. They are largely, from the necessities of their specialization, out of touch with the life of the soul, absorbed in post-mortem examination of dead documents. They hear few confessions. They know little of the conversion of souls. They do not sufficiently remember that 'the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.' They do not see the living and life-giving value of the Risen Body of Christ as it helps man to conquer the strong passions and to struggle upward to perfect self-control.

And many of these critics hold the defective doctrines of Protestantism about Holy Communion, and fail to grasp the Catholic truth of the real presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the blessed Sacrament. The Catholic knows that God does not feed him with the dust and worms of a far-off corruption, but with the living and life-giving Body and Blood of our dear Redeemer. We know 'that our sinful bodies are made clean by His Body,' and that our bread and wine, caught up into union with His Risen Body, become His

very Body and Blood. It is their failure to believe in the Catholic doctrine of the Holy Eucharist which makes it difficult for some to retain their belief in the Resurrection. The real significance of their denial would come home more fully to those who believe that our Lord's Body rotted away in the tomb, if they abstained from using blinding phrases in a sense which absolutely contradicts the central conviction of the apostles. If they deny what the apostles believed—that our Lord's Body was raised from the tomb and did not see corruption—why do they still speak of 'our Risen Master'? From what was He raised? They say His manifestations of Himself after death reassured the apostles of the continuity of His life. But continuity is readily assured to us by innumerable appearances, well authenticated, when in the moment of danger a mother appears to save her child. If this were all, why not call Him 'our continuous Master' instead of 'our Risen Master'? We should then realize what a parody this contention is of the original belief of the Church. For it was not 'continuity' but resurrection which convinced the apostles of the victory of right over wrong, of life over death, and so of the forgiveness of sins in Him.

With regard to these opinions, by which university professors attempt to accommodate the Catholic

Faith to the supposed necessities of the Modern Mind, it is well to remember that our Lord always addressed His gospel to the healthy instincts of the heart, and was supremely indifferent to the subtle reasonings of the head. The contempt of the intellectual was poured unceasingly on S. Paul, who was not ashamed of his gospel, and made no attempt to harmonize it with the science of his day. And in these matters it is better to trust in the Lord than to put any confidence in critics. The more men realize the spiritual value of the bodily Resurrection of our Lord, the more they realize the mentality of the human body, which much more resembles a commonwealth of persons than a machine; the more they realize the transcendence of God, and the almost unlimited interpenetration of the material world by spiritual forces, the more reluctant will they be to abandon the Faith of Christendom in order to accommodate their belief to passing phases of scientific knowledge.

6. *The Church and the Sacraments.*—The Incarnation, then, is the point at which the sacramental principle in the universe culminates—when spirit expresses itself in matter, God unites man's nature to Himself, and 'the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.'

This is the beginning of a new creation, of a new race of men, the twice-born sons of God, who are

born of water and the Spirit in Holy Baptism into the new stock of redeemed humanity, the Body of the Risen and Ascended Son of God.

Our approach to God is no longer merely spiritual, by an unaided effort of our mind holding communion with the Spirit of the universe. It is now sacramental: it embraces the whole man, body as well as soul. In the sacraments God uplifts the whole man, body and soul, into union with the Divine Humanity of our Lord. We are incorporated into Christ that He may work through us for the redemption of the world. We are members of Christ—His hands, His feet, His lips, His heart—through whom He wills to teach and labour for the redemption of the world. The Christian sacraments preserve the truth of the Incarnation and proclaim that Christianity is pre-eminently the religion of the body, that our bodies are as closely united to the Body of Christ as the branches are to the vine, or as the hand is to the heart. This redeems Christianity from becoming a mere religion of the spirit. It finally destroys that spurious spirituality which fastened a man's attention exclusively on his soul, his thoughts and feelings. It teaches us that every muscle and nerve and tendon of the body is to be sanctified and developed to its highest power for the service of God.

The sacraments also teach us that religion is

corporate, not merely individual. Modern Protestantism, by its exaggerated individualism, is the death of true religion. Against the whole witness of science and philosophy and revelation it treats man as a separate isolated individual whose 'religion is between my soul and God alone.'

This is the exaltation of selfishness, the very essence of sin, into an idol. This exaggerated individualism is essential death, the disintegration of the body into its component particles.

The very thing which Christ came to save us from was this selfishness of a false individualism. He saves us from self by incorporating us into His Body, the Holy Catholic Church.

It is by incorporation into a brotherhood that He saves us from self. For a brotherhood disciplines the selfish individual in a thousand ways. It teaches him to obey the officers set over him: it teaches him that his crude ideas and little partial experience must be subordinated to the Church's Creed, which is the spiritual experience of the Body; it educates (educes) the powers of his soul by offering him endless opportunities of ministry to others. It disciplines his moral and spiritual life by urging him to confess his sins to the brotherhood whom his sins have injured. It bases the assurance of his pardon, not on the treacherous verdict of his own heart, but on the judgment of the Body whom

God has commissioned to forgive sins in His name. It uplifts him from the perilous isolation of merely private devotion, which may only express his own spiritual poverty and selfishness, into the grand movement of corporate worship. Above all, it gives stability to his faith. The Catholic is not dependent on his own opinions or feelings, which may fluctuate before and after dinner, and are much dependent on the state of his health in body and soul. Nor need he wait nervously for the latest verdict of some professor whose opinions may change from year to year.

And it saves him from spiritual isolation. He finds our Lord, not only in that priceless, intimate friendship of his soul with its Saviour. He knows Him too in the full rich majesty of the King upon His throne surrounded by His court, that great cloud of witnesses who watch our conflict and support us by their prayers.

The neglect of the Communion of Saints among Protestants and in the Church impoverishes the whole spiritual atmosphere in which the soul must live its life. In the widespread disuse of the pious custom of asking the saints for their prayers, our Church has for a time lost one of the privileges which belong to us as Catholics. The almost universal neglect of the observance of saints' days and of the commemoration of the Holy Martyrs

lowers the whole tone of spiritual aspiration. We no longer aspire to perfection. We acquiesce in a low standard of spiritual effort. We lack fervour. We expect our religion to make us more comfortable, to be an added luxury to a self-indulgent life, and we are not eager to suffer for it, to rejoice if we are counted worthy to suffer shame 'for the Name.'

The weakening of practical belief in the Communion of the Saints cuts us off from the past, and makes us forgetful of what we owe to those who laid down their lives for our sake. We recite without fervour those prayers which throb with the passion of the saints, without gratitude that Creed which was bought with the blood of martyrs. We lose the stimulation of the example of the lives of the saints, which would inspire us to emulate their love and self-sacrifice. And so religion becomes debased into a mere code of respectability, when it was meant to be an inspiration of heroism. This neglect of intercourse with the saints and prayers for the departed narrows down our life until it becomes engrossed in that section of it which lies between the cradle and the grave, and loses sight of the far horizons and the heavenly city. This loss of aspiration, this lack of the spirit of adventure, will be corrected as we learn a fuller realization of the Communion of Saints. As our Church bids us join with angels and archangels and

all the company of heaven in offering our praise to God, so we should ask the saints to help us with their prayers, and our life will be enriched with the living sympathy of those great souls whose victory is won.

The Incarnation and its extension in the Church and her sacraments is, then, the consummation of the sacramental principle in the universe. The Spirit which through the long ages has been expressing itself in the material has at last accomplished His purpose in the revelation of the sons of God.

‘The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.’¹

At every Eucharist the Church stands at the altar as the High Priest of God’s creation, and, gathering up every rich splendour of colour and sound, the gold and the jewels, the lights and the incense, the flowers and the bread and wine, she offers them all to God in union with the sacrifice of His dear Son. At every Eucharist the dumb inarticulate groaning of creation bursts forth into a song of praise.

¹ Rom. viii. 19–21.

The altar is the burning bush, aflame with God, who embraces all creation in His redemptive love.

The lightnings and voices and thunders, the seven lamps of fire, the glassy sea, the four living creatures, break forth in the unresting, undying song: 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, which was and which is and which is to come. . . . Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honour and the power: for thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they were and were created.' 'And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth. And I saw, and I heard a voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour,

and glory, and blessing. And every created thing which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, heard I saying, Unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the dominion for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the elders fell down and worshipped.’¹

¹ Rev. iv. 8, 11; v. 8-14.

CHAPTER VII

THE CHRISTIAN SACRAMENTS

WE have traced the sacramental principle that Spirit expresses itself in matter through its manifestation in the universe, in man's nature, and in man's social intercourse. We have seen that this principle operates in such ways as localization, stimulus, symbols, natural, conventional, and vital, so that it not only develops, educates, draws out the activities of a man's personality by stimulus, and the concentration of his attention on a certain point in time and space, but by material means enables one spirit to hold communion with other spirits and to communicate its thoughts and life to them.

Before passing on to consider the Church's teaching on the sacraments, it is necessary to emphasize the two points touched on in the last chapter.

Christianity is essentially social, and it is pre-eminently the religion of the body:

(Christianity is essentially social, for it is based on the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity. It does not issue forth from the God of Unitarians, a cold, passionless Absolute who dwells from all eternity in the isolation of an eternal solitude. God is Love. This is His very nature. He does not become love at the creation: He is love from all eternity. But love must have an object; so it is easier to believe in two Persons in the Godhead than in one. (But love which is merely mutual, receiving back exactly what it gives, is wanting in one characteristic of love in its highest form. As the love and self-bestowal of father and mother does not reach its highest development until it is embodied in a third, and the child becomes the bond of union between those who gave it birth, so the Christian finds it easy to believe that there are three Persons in the unity of the Godhead, and that the love of God the Father for God the Son is perfected in the Person of God the Holy Spirit, and all eternity is on fire with love.)

(In this fact, that the Christian worships a supra-personal unity of three Persons in one God, we find the true analysis of man's nature.) For in every department of thought it is now recognized that a crude individualism which treats each man as a single, solitary, isolated individual is not the fundamental truth of man's nature.

Man is indeed a person, and therefore an individual. But that personality is essentially social, dependent for its very existence on other persons and knit up with them in the solidarity of the race. The Trinitarian doctrine of the Godhead gives to us also the truth of our manhood and enables us to realize the meaning of that word, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.'¹

Because man is essentially social he can only realize himself in brotherhood. Eastern religion generally so exaggerates the corporate life that the individual counts for nothing. The tribe or nation or caste system crushes individuality. On the other hand it has been the disaster of later Protestantism so to exaggerate the independence of the individual as entirely to destroy the sense of corporate life. That utterly selfish cry of modern Protestantism, 'I won't have any man between my soul and God,' has found a faithful echo in the present bestial economic system of unrestrained competition which pits man against man in cruel bloodless warfare from the cradle to the grave, and has substituted the private gain of the individual for the common wealth. Happily it contains in itself the certainty of its own destruction, for this crude individualism is not true to man's nature.)

The Trinitarian conception of man's nature de-

¹ Gen. i. 26.

mands some method which will keep in balance and mutual interaction the individual and the corporate life. In the sacramental system of the Church these two essentials of man's nature are duly balanced. Each soul is born again of water and of Spirit in Holy Baptism, one by one. But it is baptized into a Body, and 'received into the congregation of Christ's flock.' When Christians are brought to the Bishop to receive the strength of the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands, each soul, one by one, must affirm for himself the response to God's call in the words 'I do.' But the bestowal of the Holy Spirit is the corporate act of the Church which consecrates the confirmed to the priesthood of the laity, and bestows upon him the Apostles' Fellowship as a responsible member in the Body of the great High Priest.

In Holy Communion it is said to each soul, one by one, 'The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee . . . The Blood . . . which was shed for thee . . . Christ died for thee.'

It is the recognition of the sanctity of the Individual. But none can receive the Body and the Blood alone, in solitude, in selfish isolation. The child of God must come to the Father as a member of the family, in the brotherhood of the Church. So with all the other sacraments. The Church does not regard Holy Matrimony as

a private affair which only concerns the two individuals joined together. She regards it as a matter which intimately concerns the whole corporate life, and which must be regulated and blessed. Sin is not merely a wound to the individual soul : it wounds the whole corporate life, and is met with the Sacrament of Penance, in which God's pardon comes to the sinner through the Church, the Body of Christ, which he has wounded by his sin.

(The second point to be noted is that Christianity is pre-eminently the religion of the body. As the social aspect of the sacraments gives us the true analysis of man's personality in the essential interaction of the individual and the brotherhood, so the sacramental teaching of the Church gives us the true analysis of man's nature by treating it as a partnership of body and soul, which react on one another, and each of which is to be consecrated entirely to God's service. Many religions, recognizing that spirit is more fundamental than matter, have treated the body with contempt. And the body has had its revenge by entirely enslaving the spirit to carnal lusts. Many imagine that they become more spiritual as they learn more and more to despise and ill-treat or neglect the body. So the Manichæans find the seat of all evil in matter, the Hindus treat the body with contempt,

the Quaker strives after a merely spiritual religion, and the Puritan boasts of his freedom from 'carnal ordinances.' These forms of religion have this in common—that they fail to sanctify the body. The body is treated at worst as irredeemably evil, and at best the material universe is treated as a sort of spring-board from which the soul may dive off into the spirit world.

But this seems to be an entirely false analysis of man's nature. It is an attempt to divorce what God has joined together. It is a doctrine which excludes from the great redemption an important part of God's universe. And this failure to consecrate the body and the material universe accounts for the stagnation of these forms of religion and their failure to give to man his highest development. The religion which is based on a false analysis of man's nature and of the nature of the universe can never become either progressive or catholic—universal.

The Catholic Church is fundamentally and essentially sacramental in its teaching. It applies the sacramental principle at every point. Remembering the immanence of God throughout His universe, which only exists and consists in Him, it embraces the whole universe, material and spiritual, in Christ's great redemption.

The Church treats matter as non-moral, neither

good nor bad in itself, dependent on the spirit's use of it to be either the instrument of good or the tool of evil, waiting for spirit either to consecrate it to God or desecrate it to the devil. It is capable of becoming either the burning bush of God's revelation, the hem of Christ's garment through which His power flows to heal the diseases of the world, the tree of life whose leaves are for the healing of the nations; or the seductive veil of vice or stimulant of passion; the tree of the knowledge of good or evil. This bread and wine may become the glutton's snare and the drunkard's tyrant; or, caught up by the Spirit, it may become the food of immortality, the Body and the Blood of Christ. Matter is non-moral, the passionless stimulus of the spirit's self-realization, the vehicle of its self-expression, the medium of its self-revelation.

The Church sanctifies it by consecrating every art, of music and painting, poetry and sculpture, to the service of the sanctuary. She teaches that to sacrifice is not to destroy but 'to make holy'—*'sacrum facere.'* She deprecates that false asceticism which often, under the impulse of spiritual pride, ruins that bodily health which is a most precious gift from God.

The Church teaches, in her sacramental system, that the body is holy as well as the soul: that the seat of evil is in the will, not in the body: that

there is no passion in the body which is evil in itself, but that passions are only evil when they are misdirected : that they are non-moral, neither good nor bad in themselves, a spring of energy which we may turn either to the fulfilment of God's will or the frustration of His purpose : that the body may become either the prison or the palace of the soul, the habitation of devils or the shrine of Deity, the tomb of a lost soul or the living temple of the Holy Ghost.

In the glorious truth of the Incarnation, when ' the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,' the Church proclaims the redemption of the body. And in the Resurrection and the Ascension of our dear Redeemer—' the firstfruits of all creation,' ' the first begotten from the dead '—we learn the destiny of our bodies, to share with the soul in the worship of heaven.

So the Church teaches us not to destroy the body, but to discipline it, until it becomes the perfect instrument of the spirit ; and in stately ritual and splendid ceremonial, in the rhythmic movement and the outward sign, she trains the body to express the passion of the soul. And this consecration of the body to share in the worship of the soul is not an accidental fad of the artistic temperament, nor is it merely the necessary discipline of corporate action. It is the expression

of the sacramental principle which, as we have seen, is deep-rooted in the very being of the universe and in the essential nature of man. It is the natural and inevitable consequence of belief in the immanence of God and the Incarnation of His Word, and it is doubtful whether those truths can be retained without full belief in the sacraments which are their shrine and shield.

With these two points in mind, that Christianity is essentially social and pre-eminently the religion of the body, because it centres in the Incarnation of the Son of God, we may pass on to notice some points in the Church's teaching on the sacraments.

1. *Holy Baptism: Regeneration.*—By sin our race is separated from God. By His Atonement Christ has made us 'at one' with God. By Baptism each soul, one by one, is born again into this redeemed Humanity, and so caught up into the atonement or reunion of man with God. By natural birth we are born in a state of alienation, as members of a fallen race, outlaws who inherit a defective nature. By Baptism we are born again into a state of grace, a state which is no longer alienated from God, but reconciled to Him. Original sin is this state of alienation and defective nature with a bias toward evil, which is as truly a fact of experience as it is a dogma of the Church. And this original sin is forgiven in Holy Baptism

by spiritual regeneration. In the Baptism of adults this applies to actual as well as original sin. When an adult comes to be baptized he should confess his sins to the priest, with true and deep contrition, before he is baptized. But the priest does not absolve him, for he is not yet within the covenant of Grace. His sins are forgiven by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. For, as we say in our Creed, we 'believe in one baptism for the remission of sins.' It is because we believe in the solidarity of the human race, that each person is not merely a single, solitary, isolated individual, but knit up into a corporate whole, that we bring infants to Holy Baptism. By natural birth they are members of a fallen race: and 'that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit,'¹ and 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.'² The infant cannot yet bring repentance and faith. But the Church in this, as in all things, supplies what the individual soul is incapable of offering, and in baptizing infants asserts a most important principle. For, by baptizing infants when they are incapable of conscious and deliberate co-operation, the Church proclaims the fundamental truth of evangelical religion, that salvation is a free gift of God's grace, that we can do nothing to merit it, but that the

¹ S. John iii. 6.

² 1 Cor. xv. 50.

merits of Christ alone win it for us, and bestow it on us as a free gift.

Those Protestant sects which refuse baptism to infants, while they claim to be evangelical, are really denying this fundamental truth of evangelical religion. In flat contradiction to the teaching of S. Paul, they are seeking to establish their own righteousness, and are not content to receive it as a free gift from God, as the Catholic Church has always taught that it is. In this they fall below the level of the Jew. For the Jew had sufficient faith in God's good will to bring the child into covenant with God when it was eight days old. But the Baptist excludes his child from the new covenant in Christ's Blood until the child can make its own contribution, thus basing its acceptance with God on human effort rather than on the free gift of God's grace. So they deny the evangelical faith, and unite themselves with those who excited our Lord's indignation by trying to hinder little children from coming to Him. 'And they brought unto Him little children, that He should touch them: and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, He was moved with indignation, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.'¹

¹ S. Mark x. 13-14.

The Catholic Church, by baptizing infants, teaches that grace is the free gift of God's love. We teach the priority of God, that before we can do anything to please or displease Him God has surrounded us with His redeeming love, that the soul of the Christian child begins its unfolding in an atmosphere of God's goodness. Just as its opening eyes gaze not at first on a hostile world, but on the face of a loving mother whose arms are around it to support its feeble efforts and to shield it from harm, so its soul awakens to find that Jesus, in His Body the Church, has already surrounded it with an atmosphere of love, has 'embraced it with the arms of His mercy,' has 'given it the blessing of eternal life.'

In my own experience of the conversion of souls I have found that this priority of God and His prevenient love is a truth of immense power. Catholics do not call to the prodigal to leave his sins in order that he may become a son of God. They remind him of his noble birth as a son of God, and call him home to his Father's heart.

So the Church teaches that in Holy Baptism we are 'regenerate and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost,' that we 'receive remission of our sins by spiritual regeneration'; prays God to 'give thy Holy Spirit to this infant that he may be born again, and made an heir of everlasting salvation, 'to release him of his sins, to

sanctify him with the Holy Ghost, to give him the kingdom of Heaven and everlasting life.' She treats the little child as though it were a garden of the Lord in whom the incorruptible seed has been planted, and prays that 'all carnal affections may die in him, and that all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in him.' She treats him as a 'cutting,' and thanks God 'that this child is regenerate, and grafted into the body of Christ's Church.'

So by a virgin birth of water and the Spirit we believe that the life of Christ is born within us, and we are new born in Him, 'born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.'¹

It is the extension of the Incarnation when 'the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.' As 'when Thou tookest upon Thee to deliver man Thou didst not abhor the virgin's womb,' so now the Word of God by the new birth of Holy Baptism enshrines Himself in the centre of our being and makes us, body and soul, the shrine of Deity, the sanctuary of God, the living temples of the Holy Spirit; a truth intoxicating in its splendour, which in one flash reveals the love of God, the dignity of man, the degradation of sin, and the method of redemption.

¹ S. John i. 13.

Many persons habitually confuse the two separate ideas of regeneration and conversion. They say that a person is regenerate when he awakens to spiritual things and is converted. But to confuse these two involves a denial of the whole meaning of the word 'regeneration.' For conversion is the conscious turning of the soul away from self and the world and sin to God. But regeneration is a birth of the divine life in the soul—a free gift from God quite independent of any co-operation of the person born. Conversion is a change of attitude of *man*. Regeneration is an action of *God*. In natural birth life comes to us in entire independence of any action on our part, for such action is impossible. It is a bestowal, a gift, a creation. So in spiritual birth it is a destruction of the whole analogy and a misunderstanding of the method of our redemption to make it antecedently dependent on our response.

The Church teaches always the priority of God. Regeneration in Holy Baptism is a birth into sonship. Conversion is the awakening to sonship. Regeneration is the act of God. Conversion is the response of man. Regeneration is the bestowal of life. Conversion is the conscious assimilation of that life.

This truth, which seems such a fine-drawn distinction of theologians, is of vast practical importance in the work of redeeming souls. On my way

to India in 1898 in a troopship, four soldiers and I used to meet daily in the bath-room for a Bible-class. One day I explained the Church's teaching on regeneration, tracing it carefully through the Bible, that by Baptism we are born again as sons of God, that this new birth is not dependent on contract or agreement, that it is not even dependent on moral conduct, for it is a free gift from God, which establishes a divine relationship, that a man is still a son even when he is living a sinful life, and even in the far-off country when he comes to himself can still say 'my Father'; and the Father says, 'This My son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found.' I noticed that one of the four, a Calvinistic corporal in the Black Watch, was looking increasingly 'dour.' So I said, 'You don't seem to agree with me, old fellow.' He answered, 'No sir, not at all.' So I asked, 'What do you make of it then?' He said, 'We four are the sons of God.' I asked, 'What about the other 1500 baptized Christians on board?' He promptly answered, 'Oh! they are the sons of the Devil!' This brought our Bible-class to an abrupt conclusion, as, after a faithful reproduction of our Lord's forcible comments on the Pharisees, I went off to join the so-called 'sons of the Devil,' and found them much better company than my Calvinistic corporal blinded with spiritual pride. For they knew that

they were sinners, and he didn't : and there is hope for everyone except the Pharisee.

The strength of the Church's teaching in this matter is that it rests on our Lord's own words, and is the strongest appeal to the heart of man. Our Lord did not tell the publicans and harlots who listened to His parable that they were sons of the Devil. He told them that sin was not their true nature, that sin is a dream from which they must awaken, a delirium from which they must recover : and that when the sinner 'comes to himself' he will say 'I will arise and go to my Father.' So the Church, in her doctrine of baptismal regeneration, arms us always with the strongest appeal to the sinner. For, like a tender mother, she still claims him as a son when all others have disowned him, and calls him home.

The practical value of the Church's teaching on regeneration in Holy Baptism is very great in an age which is unduly depressed with ideas of heredity, ideas of uncertain scientific validity which none the less discourage many souls in their spiritual warfare. When Mendelism was first effectively preached in England, a Cambridge writer of some position informed us that for the future we might abandon all hopes of improving the race by education and social reform and so on : that redemption lay only in breeding, as the

dominant factor was bound to assert itself, and as the only hope of redemption lay in improving the stock. There is no doubt some truth in this, though the attempt of some eugenists to redeem mankind by stud-farm methods seems doomed to failure. It is a mistake frequently made by the camp-followers of science, due to their forgetting the fact that science works by methods of abstraction, to transfer the truths revealed in experiments among plants and birds and animals, without qualifications to man. What is true of the world which is chiefly determinate, becomes less true in proportion as the world becomes indeterminate and self-determinate. For, after all, a man is not a sweet-pea or a pigeon, nor even a horse: he is a man. But Mendelism probably contains some truth for man; and that is why the Church treats marriage as the concern of the whole Body of Christ, and not merely of the two most immediately concerned. The truth of this teaching about birth and breeding is emphasized by the Church's teaching on the need of regeneration; though how far this is the same truth in a higher region of development, or only a parallel truth which gives a helpful analogy or illustration, it is as yet impossible to say.

But the Christian does not have to work up from below by process of discovery. His truth

descends from above by process of revelation. As the race is redeemed by God's entrance into human life by means of the Virgin Birth, so the individual is incorporated into this redeemed Humanity, without entering again into his mother's womb, by the virgin birth of water and the Spirit in Holy Baptism. And this doctrine gives him new courage to fight against any evil tendencies he may have inherited from his ancestors. For, as he feels stirring within him the old curse of an evil inheritance, he knows also that there is quickening within him the new vitality of a new stock, of a dominant factor, of the very life of Jesus, 'having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the Word of God, which liveth and abideth.' ¹

This is the secret of our Christian victory, the spring of an undying hope, the transfiguration of an abiding joy, which kindles the flame of eternal youth in the eyes of the twice-born sons of God, that in Christ all things are renewed: 'Behold, I make all things new.' ²

'Christ in you, the hope of glory.'³

By natural birth we are heirs of an old worn-out stock which has failed, which is infected with incurable tendencies to evil, which crushes hope beneath the burden of heredity.

¹ 1 S. Peter i. 23.

² Rev. xxi. 5.

³ Col. i. 27.

God does not tell us to perfect the old, but to receive the new. A new birth,¹ a new heart, a new spirit,² a new stock in the new Adam³ kindles a new hope and a new energy within us, to be consummated in a new heaven and a new earth, in the new Jerusalem which comes down out of heaven from God.⁴

Regeneration is a virgin birth ; not a natural evolution from within, but a divine bestowal from above, a gift of God. And this new birth in Holy Baptism is not merely an isolated fact but a continuous process, as the Holy Spirit perfects day by day what He has begun. On Christmas Day, when we commemorate the Virgin Birth which regenerates the race, the Church reminds us of our baptism : ‘ Almighty God, who has given Thine only begotten Son to take our nature upon Him, and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin : grant that we, being regenerate and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy Holy Spirit, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the same Spirit, ever one God world without end.’⁵

But while in this doctrine of regeneration the

¹ S. John iii. 5.

² Rom. v. 15.

⁵ Collect for Christmas Day.

² Ezek. xi. 19.

⁴ Rev. xxi. 1-6.

Church insists on the priority of God, she does not neglect the duty of man to respond to this gift as soon as his unfolding life makes this possible.

2. *Confirmation*.—In the earliest days of the Church, Baptism and Confirmation were administered together to infants as well as adults by the Bishop of the small community. In the East this custom still prevails, and every person is confirmed by the Chrism at the same time that he is baptized.

In the West the two became separated. And the baptized had to wait till an opportunity occurred of approaching the Bishop to be confirmed. And till the sixteenth century it was the rule that infants were to be confirmed as soon after Baptism as access to a Bishop was possible.

In our part of the Church the rule is 'So soon as children are come to a competent age, and can say, in their mother tongue, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments; and also can answer to the other questions of this short Catechism; they shall be brought to the Bishop. And every one shall have a Godfather, or a Godmother, as a witness of their Confirmation.' In many dioceses the Bishop overrides the rule of the Church, and refuses to confirm children under the age of fourteen, with disastrous consequences to the Church. This probably arose from the fact

that till recently many of our bishops were schoolmasters or college 'dons' with no parochial experience, and accustomed to have boys under their instruction till eighteen years of age: and did not realize the difficulty of parish priests in getting boys for instruction when once they have gone to work. The result is that about 70 per cent. of lads who join the army and who profess to be members of the Church of England are unconfirmed and so almost debarred from Communion. This arbitrary and unwise action of some bishops can be partly corrected if parish priests avail themselves of another rubric and admit to Communion children, otherwise qualified, who are 'ready and desirous to be confirmed,' even though the Bishop refuses to accept them for Confirmation. But it is much to be hoped that all bishops will soon accept candidates who are qualified according to the requirements of the Church. The child at twelve years of age has to face great temptations, is quite capable of grievous sin, and is still available for instruction. It seems most unfair to send him out to battle unarmed and unshielded by that strength of the Holy Spirit which is given in Confirmation, and without the priceless help of a habit of receiving the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion.

Confirmation is referred to in the Bible under

the names of 'the laying on of hands,' 'the Seal,' and 'the Unction.'

In Acts viii. we read that when Philip the Deacon had baptized people in Samaria, the Church 'sent unto them Peter and John, who when they were come down prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: for as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.' Again, in Acts xix., S. Paul found certain disciples at Ephesus who had only been baptized 'into John's baptism' of repentance. S. Paul instructed them, and they were baptized 'into the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them.' It is strange to find modern evangelicals, who depend on S. Paul's teaching for their doctrine of faith, despising or underrating those ordinances of Baptism and Confirmation on which the great apostle of faith placed so great a value. In the Epistle to the Hebrews (vi. 1), the first principles of Christ and the foundations are said to be repentance and faith, 'the teaching of baptism and of *laying on of hands*,' resurrection and judgment. Again, S. Paul writes: 'Ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.'¹ 'And grieve not the Holy Spirit

¹ Eph. i. 13.

of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption.' ¹ 'Now he that stablisheth us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God; who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.' ² The Chrism, the anointing with holy oil blessed by the Bishop, is used in the Greek and Roman Churches. The method of administration in our part of the Church is the laying on of hands of the Bishop, by which, in answer to the prayers of the Church, the Holy Spirit confirms or strengthens the soul of the person confirmed.

We may regard Confirmation as the act which admits the young recruit into the fighting ranks of the army of the Lord of Hosts, the body-guard of Christ, and arms him with the sword of the Spirit for aggressive warfare.

It may also be taken as a form of ordination to the priesthood of the laity, which admits the person confirmed into full participation in the offering of the Holy Sacrifice. For it cannot be too often repeated that the whole body of the Church, and every member of it, laity and clergy alike, is a priestly body, the Body of our great High Priest: that every Eucharist is a sacrifice offered by Christ Himself through His Body the Church: that the whole Church in every case offers the Holy Sacrifice and not merely the officiating priest: that the clergy

¹ Eph. iv. 30.

² 2 Cor. i. 21.

are ministerial priests, a function of the priestly Body, the hand by which the Church breaks the Bread, the lips through which the Church blesses the Cup. To create a caste priesthood is to make an apathetic laity, who leave all their duties to be done for them by the clergy, and fail to make their own contribution to the common life of the whole. When each child learns that at Confirmation he is anointed and ordained as a priest of God he will realize that he is as much bound to assist at the Holy Sacrifice on Sundays and Holy Days of obligation as the priest who stands at the altar. And as he tries to realize his priesthood in prayer and worship and intercession, and in manifesting to the world a life of entire consecration to the service of God, the palsied limbs of our Church will tingle with the quickening life of the Holy Spirit as every member responds to His kindling flame.

It is undoubtedly a great blessing to have in the life of each child who is born again in Holy Baptism, an occasion such as Confirmation affords for calling on the child to make a deliberate response to the gift of the Divine Life. The renewal of baptismal vows is not of the essence of Confirmation. They may be renewed on any occasion, and generally are so renewed during a parochial mission. But the preparation for Confirmation gives us a great opportunity of winning from the child that

awakening to sonship and that entire consecration to God's service which are the essence of faith, and of a true conversion. And the Church's method of the careful instruction of the mind, culminating in a strong resolution of the heart and will, a resolve openly professed before the Bishop and whole congregation in the words 'I do,' is much preferable to the method of many Nonconformist bodies who leave the conversion of the young to the chance influence of an eloquent preacher who may awaken in them an emotional upheaval which may lead to a true conversion. It may lead also to a merely emotional religion which has little foundation in a consecrated will, and which demands the perpetual stimulation of sensational preaching to keep alive its fitful flame. In this contrast we see one of the chief advantages of the Church's sacramental system. It ministers to the whole man at every point. It consecrates the body by the outward touch while it sanctifies the soul with inward spirit. It appeals to the whole personality: to sensation in sight and hearing and touch: to the mind which is instructed: to the will whose attention is concentrated on a definite point in time and space: and to the heart which is inflamed to respond to the Divine Gift of Grace.

3. *Holy Matrimony*.—Holy Matrimony is generally counted as a sacrament which, when contracted

worthily, confers grace for right living in the married state. The two essential points in a valid marriage are, firstly, that there must be no impediment of such a kind as to make the marriage invalid; and secondly, the consent of the two persons contracting the marriage, which must be mutual, deliberate, voluntary, and outwardly shown.

‘According to Western theology, any such marriage of two unbaptized persons is valid, but not sacramental; and every valid marriage of baptized persons is sacramental, whether it is contracted before a priest or not.’¹

Holy Matrimony illustrates the sacramental principle in two ways. The ceremony by which Holy Matrimony is blessed by the Church illustrates the points of localization, concentration, and symbol, in the words, the joining of hands, and the giving of the ring. It also well illustrates the social side of sacraments which claim for all the members of the Body the right to sympathize. ‘Whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it.’ It is necessary to insist on the social aspect of this as of all sacraments, that marriage is not a matter which concerns the two contracting parties alone, that it concerns the State which must decide which unions it will recognize

¹ Darwell Stone, *Outlines of Christian Dogma*, p. 212.

as legitimate for its citizens, and the Church which must decide what unions are permissible for her members. The Church, while she allows separation 'a thoro et mensa,' 'from bed and board,' absolutely refuses to allow the remarriage of either party during the lifetime of the other, and treats such unions as adulterous. The State can, if it pleases, make its own laws, and can recognize polygamy as legitimate if it wishes to do so. But if Christian citizens believe that the Church's law of the indissolubility of the marriage bond except by death is the expression of God's will in nature as well as in grace, they are bound to urge the State as far as possible to recognize this standard as its ideal. This law of nature is taught in Gen. ii. 24 :

'Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife : and they shall be one flesh.'

Christians must not attempt to use the powers of the State to enforce their ideals on those who do not accept their religion. For such acceptance must depend on persuasion and not on force ; on the obedience of the will, not on the constraint of outward action. Therefore it seems right that there should be no state penalty attached to the sin of fornication or adultery.

But Christians cannot treat the Christian moral standard as though it were a matter which concerns

themselves alone. They believe that it represents God's will for man, based upon man's nature in its individual and corporate expression. And, while they must not desire the State to enforce it by punishment, they should desire the State to encourage it by recognition. The function of the State in morals is not merely to restrain vice but also to encourage virtue. It does not claim to dictate morals to the individual as far as his vices may be thought to affect himself alone, except in the case of suicide, when it protects a man against himself. But it restrains him when his vices affect others, and so concern the commonwealth.

But the State has a positive function of encouraging social virtue as well as restraining social vice. It not only condemns certain men as bad citizens; it also recognizes others as good citizens, such as contribute to the commonwealth or 'well-being.' Unless we accept the ideal of anarchy and treat the State as purely negative in its functions, a keeper in a menagerie of wild beasts, the State ought to have some ideal of the commonwealth. This it has: it wars against ignorance, and encourages education. It wars against disease, and encourages sanitation. It wars against cruelty and violence, and encourages self-sacrifice. It punishes dishonesty (chiefly among its poorer and weaker members), and encourages honesty, of a

sort, in allocating public contracts. It seems, then, to be right for a Christian citizen to use all his influence to get the State to adopt or to retain his moral ideals in a matter which so profoundly affects the commonwealth as the indissolubility of marriage.

To say ' This does not concern me as a Christian ' is to abdicate one's duties of citizenship, to withdraw one's influence from the formation of national ideals, and to leave those ideals to be fashioned by men of stronger convictions and perhaps of lower moral standard. This refusal to urge our social ideals on the State seems to spring from a failure to realize the positive function of the State, and the natural basis of Christian morals, as expressing the truth of man's nature.

It is the attempt to introduce undenominationalism, that fundamental scepticism, into the moral sphere, to apply to morals that desolating fallacy in which falsehood masquerades in the garments of partial truth—' that every man has a right to his own opinion, that there is no objective standard of right or wrong any more than there is of truth or falsehood, that virtue and vice are merely matters of opinion, that there is much good in every religion, and that we should not interfere with the religion of other people by trying to convert them to our own': in short, ' that Christianity is an

opinion which happens to suit me, and that it doesn't matter if it doesn't suit you.'

This fundamental moral scepticism is a denial of the Christian Spirit. The faith which inspired the saints and nerved the martyrs to fling down their challenge to the world and leap triumphant into the arms of death was the belief that God had revealed Himself in Jesus Christ, that Christ speaks with the absolute authority of God, which we must try to persuade all men to obey. The same faith will teach us that as good citizens we Christians must try to persuade the State to adopt Christian ideals while we insist that it shall not enforce them by punishment; that divorce with the right to remarry puts asunder what God in civil as well as in Christian marriage has joined together; that divorce with remarriage, however restrained in its beginnings, has within it the certainty of the destruction of monogamy and the ruin of the home; that it has brought widespread moral instability to America; and that we must do our best to banish it from the life of our nation. We cannot, without a serious neglect of duty, refuse to make our contribution, to bear our witness and take our part in forming the moral ideals of our national life.

But while every Christian is bound as a good citizen to do his best to conform the marriage laws

of the State to those of the Church, believing them to be the laws of man's nature which will bring him to his highest development, these laws affect him primarily as a member of Christ's Body the Church.

This idea is enshrined in our service of Holy Matrimony in such phrases as 'keep themselves undefiled members of Christ's body,' 'signifying unto us the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and His Church,' 'O God, who has consecrated the state of Matrimony to such an excellent mystery, that in it is signified and represented the spiritual marriage and unity betwixt Christ and His Church; Look mercifully upon these Thy servants, that . . . this man may love his wife, according to Thy Word (as Christ did love His spouse the Church, who gave Himself for it, loving and cherishing it even as His own flesh).'

We see, then, in Holy Matrimony the highest development of the sacramental principle until we come to Holy Communion. It is the purification of a natural impulse until it becomes a spiritual passion. Whether Haeckel's anthropomorphic speculations on the flirtations and love affairs of hydrogen and oxygen are merely fanciful and romantic sentiment, or whether they contain any element of truth, it is hard to say. But at least we can trace the apparently blind union of the male and female element in flowers, up through the more

conscious impulse of animals, and the love-songs of the birds, to the lust of carnal man, and see this lust purified until it becomes love. Lust is the desire to get. Love is the desire to give. Lust is the impulse of self-indulgence. Love is the instinct of self-sacrifice. Lust is the impulse of an animal. Love is the passion of a god. 'God so loved the world that He *gave* His only begotten Son.'

So by manifold restraints the animal impulse is purified into a spiritual passion which can co-operate with God's purpose and be subordinated to His will ; and which enables man to share the most exalted prerogatives of God. God the Creator allows man to pro-create in His Name. God the Lifegiver allows man to transmit his life. God who made us in His image and likeness allows man to call into existence a being who shall bear his image and likeness. And in this supreme act of union we see the essence of the sacramental principle in that communion which is the bestowal of life.

And as the consummation of Holy Matrimony is a co-operation with God for a spiritual purpose, in the bestowal of life the Church claims the offspring for her own, receives the child into her fellowship, returns it to the parents to be trained for God, and appoints god-parents to see that the child is brought up to realize its membership in the Body of Christ, the Holy Catholic Church.

4. *Holy Orders*.—The way in which Holy Orders illustrates the sacramental principle has been mentioned in the chapter which deals with the Church. It is only necessary at this point to repeat that Christ did not leave grace and truth to the chance survival of a spiritual tradition; that He committed them to an organized society which is His Body, the Holy Catholic Church; that He appointed the apostles to bear rule in that Body, and gave them authority fully to represent Him. 'He that heareth you heareth me; and he that rejecteth you rejecteth me; and he that rejecteth me rejecteth him that sent me.' ¹

It is important to insist that the whole Church and every member of it is a priest. It is the Body of our great High Priest, and so is sacerdotal through and through, in every part and in every member. But every body develops by differentiation of function; and these are developed, not by chance, but in fulfilment of God's purpose. In the human body a hand develops, not because it wants to become a hand, but because of the purpose of God manifested in the nature of the human body. So in the Church, Holy Orders are not merely developed because the Church has need of them; but because God willed them in constituting His Body the Church. 'God hath set the members

¹ S. Luke x. 16.

each one of them in the body, even as it pleased him.' 'God tempered the body together.' 'God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers,' etc.¹

We must distinguish between 'ἐξουσία' 'authority,' and 'δυναμίς' 'power.'

Holy Orders give divine 'authority' to certain men to act as ministerial priests and deacons on behalf of the whole priestly body. The Bishop laying his hands on the head of each candidate for the diaconate says: 'Take thou Authority to execute the Office of a Deacon in the Church of God committed to thee; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' Then he delivers to every one of them the New Testament, saying: 'Take thou Authority to read the Gospel in the Church of God, and to preach the same, if thou be thereto licensed by the Bishop himself.'

And on ordaining priests, 'the Bishop with the priests present shall lay their hands severally on the head of everyone that receiveth the Order of Priesthood; the Receivers humbly kneeling upon their knees, and the Bishop saying,

'Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed to thee by the Imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 18, 24, 28.

whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained. And be thou a faithful Dispenser of the Word of God and of His holy Sacraments ; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

Then the Bishop shall deliver to every one of them kneeling, the Bible into his hand, saying,

' Take thou Authority to preach the Word of God and to minister the holy Sacraments in the Congregation, where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto.'

In these ways men are set apart by God to teach and act with the authority of the Church. If any one of them teaches what is not in accordance with the Church's teaching, he can be 'inhibited' by the Bishop—that is, forbidden to preach in the Church's name. It is at every point a matter, not of spiritual power, but of apostolical authority.

The preaching of prophets is on a different basis. It depends on 'dunamis'—spiritual power. The claim of a prophet is to express his own convictions. He does not speak with the authority of the Church, but merely with the power of his own convictions. He may be a better preacher than the priest, more in earnest, more spiritual, more learned, more persuasive. But this is beside the point.

A civilian or a soldier in the ranks may be braver, stronger, a more determined character and more clever than his officer. But this does not make

him an officer, nor give him authority to command. So in the ministry of those religious bodies who have separated from communion with their Bishop we may gladly and most thankfully recognize their goodness and their power and the way in which God makes use of their ministry. We can thankfully recognize them for all that they claim to be, men who have been chosen by the societies to which they belong to preach to them and to minister to them. They do not claim to be bishops or priests. They do not claim to offer the Holy Sacrifice or to forgive sins in God's Name. They claim to be ministers of their congregations, and we should gladly recognize them as such.

But such recognition does not in any way carry with it any approval of the claim of such men to preach in our churches. It would be to abandon every claim of the Holy Church to teach with authority, if those who have separated from her communion or refuse to join it, and who do not acknowledge the authority of the Bishop, were to be allowed to instruct those who do acknowledge his authority and are prepared to accept the Church's teaching when it is given to them.

To allow such unauthorized teachers to preach to our people would be to violate the rights of every person present and to introduce utter anarchy into the disciplined life of the Church.

Holy Orders illustrates the sacramental principle in that it is a movement of the Holy Spirit gathering up the life of the Church and concentrating it at a certain point in time and place, and by the laying on of the Bishop's hands using material means to accomplish spiritual ends. And as in all sacraments, it is a corporate social act which sets apart the individual life in the fellowship of the Body for a certain purpose, that he may speak and act for the Body in God's name.

5. *Penance*.—We have seen that our Lord in the world did not found a debating society for the discussion of the truth; nor did He found an amorphous undenominational association of those who 'had agreed to differ,' who, either being indifferent to the truth or else despairing of ever attaining it, would breathe forth to the world a vague atmospheric piety, and a sentimental morality touched with emotion. He formed the Holy Catholic Church as His spirit-bearing Body, a brotherhood of the twice-born sons of God, the army of the Lord of Hosts for the establishment of His kingdom of heaven in the hearts of men. He appointed its first officers, laid down the lines for its development, promised it His abiding presence, filled it with the Holy Spirit, and gave it the threefold commission to teach, to baptize, and to forgive or retain sins. This last point in the commission to the Church—

the power to admit men to its communion or expel them from it—is absolutely essential to any organism or to any organization which has to live in the world. And the Church, though divine in her origin and founded in the eternal sphere, has to energize in the phenomenal world.

No human body could exist a week which had not the power to expel what was harmful or useless to its life.

No army could live for a day which had not the right or power to discipline its members.

Every corporate society in England to-day—the trade unions, Oddfellows, Freemasons—has the right to lay down its conditions of membership, and to expel those who, after warning, refuse to submit to them.

Corporate life is impossible on any other condition; and the claim of some to teach in the Church's name, not when they merely doubt, but when they deliberately deny the Church's teaching, is an impudence which, if it were tolerated, would destroy the Church's life. Our Lord, in constituting His Church, promised this power of discipline to S. Peter and the apostles in the following passages: 'I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' 'What things

soever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and what things soever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' ¹

These promises were fulfilled after His Resurrection.

'Jesus therefore said to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.' ²

The explanation that the exercise of this divine commission is satisfied by the general declaration of forgiveness at Matins and Evensong and in the Holy Eucharist cannot for a moment be maintained. For it is obviously impossible to retain sins when it is not known what they are. This is a good example of the evasions to which men are reduced who shirk the responsibility of exercising discipline, and who regard the Church as merely an assembly of individuals, and ignore its corporate life.

From the first the sin of a Christian has always been regarded, not as a private affair between his soul and God, but as a wound to the Body of Christ, the Holy Catholic Church.

S. Paul exercised this duty of judgment: 'I

¹ S. Matt. xvi. 19, xviii. 18.

² S. John xx. 21-3.

verily, being absent in body, but present in spirit, have already, as though I were present, judged him that hath so wrought this thing, in the name of the Lord Jesus, ye being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.' ¹

'But to whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also : for what I also have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, for your sakes have I forgiven it in the person of Christ.' ²

However we may understand these passages, it cannot be questioned that in the Bible we have the record of our Lord's commission to forgive or retain sins in active operation.

In the first assemblies of Christians for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist it was apparently the custom for each person openly to confess his sins. And this method is still open to those who object to the secrecy of confession.

But the method of open confession was after a while abandoned, as it proved to be injurious to the souls of others to hear the public confession of grievous sin. So the duty of hearing such confessions and of imposing penance fell to the priest, who also pronounced the Absolution when the penance had

¹ 1 Cor. v. 3-5.

² 2 Cor. ii. 10.

been performed. In this, as in all things, he does not act as a private individual, but on behalf of the Body of Christ.

The sin of the Christian wounds the Body of Christ, and so wounds God. God forgives through the Body which is injured.

This method of discipline was fully retained at the Reformation in our part of the Church, as may be seen in the declaration at Matins and Evensong, in the first long exhortation to Communion, and in the Visitation of the Sick, in which, if the sick man's 'conscience is troubled with any weighty matter,' the priest is commanded by the Church to 'move him to make a special confession of his sins.'

'Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special Confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which Confession the Priest shall absolve him (if he humbly and heartily desire it) after this sort :

'Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences : and by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.'

The Sacrament of Penance is the outward expression of the inward penitence of the soul, and includes the inward disposition of contrition, the

outward confession of sins, and the resolve to make satisfaction, to undo any harm we may have done and to amend the life. The word 'penance' is especially associated with some task to be performed, to acknowledge that our sins deserve punishment and to show obedience to the Church. The benefit of Absolution is the authoritative pardon of our sins by God through His Church which looses us from their bonds and cleanses us from our guilt.

The rich blessing which those win who make use of this sacrament is the full assurance of pardon, which rests not merely on our own feelings, for these in many cases are most deceptive, but on the authoritative judgment of the Church.

The failure to use this means of grace accounts for much stagnation in many souls, who will never make progress in their spiritual life until they have broken that pride which refuses to humble itself in confession.

The repulsive attitude of selfishness which glories in declaring 'I won't have any man between my soul and God' is the very contradiction of the essentially corporate character of Christianity, and a refusal to recognize the very method of discipline which Christ Himself appointed. The principle of all confession is that we own our sins in order that we may disown them. Our sins are ours because they bear the hall-mark of our will.

We confess them in order to assure the Church that our will has changed, and now abhors that to which it once consented.

The chief need of the present day is a deeper conviction of sins and a more widespread use of the Sacrament of Penance. The laity cannot be blamed for its neglect, as so many clergy fail to instruct souls in the Church's teaching on this subject.

The psychological value of the sacramental system may be noted again in this sacrament as in Confirmation. The sacramental principle of localization and concentration are again illustrated. Conviction of sin is brought to a definite point in time and place, a point of crisis or judgment. The soul has to concentrate itself on its spiritual state, to take stock of itself, to mark its progress or failure. Conviction is deepened as the interior disposition of the soul finds outward expression in a humble confession. And as conviction and contrition are deepened by being brought to a definite point in confession, so the joy of God's mercy and gratitude to Him for pardon in the Precious Blood inflames the soul as it is concentrated on the blessed words of Absolution.

But perhaps the chief gain after the 'benefit of Absolution' is the emphasis this sacrament lays on the essentially social and corporate nature of our religion. We are reminded again and again

that we are members of a brotherhood : that no man liveth to himself or dieth to himself : that ' whether one member suffer all the members suffer with it ' : that our sin not only injures our own life but the life of the whole Church : that the brethren whom we have injured believe us to be truly penitent, and rejoice to minister God's pardon to us, and embrace us again in full communion.

6. *Unction of the Sick*.—The Sacrament of Unction rests on the practice of the apostles when the Lord sent them out on their first mission. And it is fair to presume that our Lord had given them instructions as to what they were to do. We read : ' And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.' ¹ This practice is further described in S. James v. 14 : ' Is any among you sick ? let him call for the elders of the Church ; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord : and the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall raise him up ; and if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him. Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.'

The Roman Church seems to have allowed the use of this sacrament to degenerate into the anointing of sick persons when there is no hope of recovery,

¹ S. Mark vi. 13.

which seems to be a perversion of the institution of the sacrament. Originally any Christian who was dangerously ill might be anointed. Unction was retained in the Church of England in the Prayer Book of 1549. There is urgent need at present for its restoration to regular use in our Church. For it would help to correct that utterly spurious spirituality which has done so much harm to our Christianity by reducing it to a mere religion of the spirit and ignoring the body. It has been pointed out, and cannot be too often repeated, that the strength of Christianity lies in the fact that it is Catholic: that it gives the true analysis of man's nature by ministering to the whole man, the body as well as the soul: that it gives the true analysis of the universe by employing material means in the fulfilment of God's will: that it is pre-eminently the religion of the body and treats man in his true nature, not as an angel or discarnate spirit, but as a partnership of body and soul, both of which are to be sanctified and consecrated to God's service. This Catholic treatment of man's nature, which refuses to make that fatal divorce between the body and soul and treats man as a whole, is preserved for us in the Church's sacramental system; and each point of the sacramental principle which we have already noticed is well illustrated in the sacrament of Unction.

These points are the primary objective essential

that Spirit expresses itself in matter, and the secondary subjective effects of this method—stimulation, localization, a point in time, and the social witness to the fact that man is not merely an individual, but that he is by his very nature essentially social. We have traced these points in Holy Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Matrimony, and Penance. They are still more clearly manifest in Unction. For Unction, in its primitive use for healing, reminds us that the sickness of the body may be healed by the Holy Spirit, symbolized by oil, in answer to the prayers of the Church. Body and soul are perpetually interpenetrating and reacting on one another, and must not be shut off into water-tight compartments. There is a mentality of the body. Every little cell among the countless millions of which the body is composed has an independent mind of its own. And, knowing the mentality of the body, we are very guilty if we treat bodily sickness as merely a matter of physic and drugs, and neglect the ministration of the Spirit in the healing of the body. This neglect of the mental and spiritual nature of the body by the Church has led to the widespread growth of Christian science, which, amidst all its absurdities, asserts with truth the supremacy of the spiritual over the material. The use of hypnotism and suggestion in certain surgeries instead of anæsthetics illustrates the same point.

The restoration of the Sacrament of Unction would again restore to the Church the power to work miracles of healing, which are at present impossible amongst us because of our unbelief. There is no spirit of expectation, which is the necessary atmosphere for such miracles.

Unction manifests these points of the sacramental principle. It appeals to the Holy Spirit to use the sacred oil for healing. It stimulates the patient by quickening faith and hope and expectation. It concentrates the attention at a certain point in time and place by localization. It finds entrance to the soul through all the senses of touch and sight and hearing. It conquers that frequent cause of lifelong sickness—the habit of acquiescing in illness and making no effort of the will.

In Unction of the sick the social nature of the sacrament is seen. The Church, the brotherhood, comes to the aid of the sick person. The corporate life flows in to strengthen his failing powers. The corporate faith reinforces his faith. The corporate prayer inflames his lukewarm desire.

Is the Lord's arm shortened that He cannot save? Do we really believe in the Son of God whose touch healed in the days of old? Do we really believe that our risen Lord is energizing in the Holy Catholic Church? Do we really believe His promise: 'He that believeth on me, the works that

I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father.' ¹ Or are we too proud to face a possible disappointment if God does not see fit to grant our prayer in the way in which we ask it? Or has the world won a victory over our faith by its loud and repeated assertions of the mechanical nature of the universe—assertions not warranted by science, but capable of mesmerizing the soul and paralyzing its faith, its courage of adventure, if they are repeated often enough with sufficient emphasis?

The time is at hand when Christians must make a real venture of faith in God and His word and power, and refuse to tramp in chains the narrow prison-yard of a determinist universe, with its walls of paper theories and battlements of intellectual vanity. The widespread revival of the Unction of the sick in parochial ministration, and especially at such times as parochial missions, would provide that atmosphere of faith in the supernatural and of expectation, without which Christ cannot do His wondrous works of healing. 'He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.' ²

'Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast it out? And He saith unto them, Because of your little faith.' ³

¹ S. John xiv. 12.

² S. Matt. xiii. 58.

³ S. Matt. xvii. 19-20.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HOLY COMMUNION

THE Holy Communion marks the culmination of the sacramental principle which we have seen is the true interpretation of the constitution of the universe and of man's nature. For in this Divine mystery God embraces the whole world in His redeeming love. Bread and wine and water represent the world of matter ; the body of man represents the world of life ; and the self-oblation of man represents the world of consciousness in its highest activity.

At the altar in the Holy Sacrifice the purpose of God is at last revealed, as the universe becomes self-conscious and articulate in man, and, bursting forth in psalms of penitence and songs of praise, offers itself in Christ to God.

There are two aspects of the Holy Eucharist. It is at once a sacrifice and a sacrament. Here it may be noted that Divine action as well as Divine truth seems to require a twofold expression if we

are to describe it fully and accurately. Perhaps, from the limitation imposed on us by the use of words, or because of the twofold nature of man, or because of necessities of succession in the phenomenal world, we require a paradox for the best expression of Divine truth, and a twofold movement to express Divine action. For example, the world process is only fully grasped when we see it from two points of view. God in His immanence working out His purpose from within; God in His transcendence increasingly penetrating the universe with His purpose from above.

In Regeneration, in Holy Baptism, Christ is born within us, and we are born into Him.

In Holy Communion we dwell in Him and He in us. It is perhaps the difference between union and communion. The first, union, is static; the second, communion, is dynamic, the living, active interpenetration of God and man. So with the two aspects of the Holy Communion, the sacrifice and the sacrament. Briefly, in a sacrifice I give God something; in a sacrament God gives me something.

1. *Holy Sacrifice*.—The sacramental principle is illustrated in the sacrifice as well as in the sacrament. For it is of the essence of a true sacrifice that there must be an outward symbol as well as an inward disposition.

It is useless to profess that the Christian Sacrifice is merely a movement of the spirit without any outward sign, merely an offering of praise and thanksgiving. This is offered unceasingly by every truly Christian soul with every breath he breathes, and finds frequent liturgical expression in the general thanksgiving at Matins and Evensong.

Such a merely spiritual offering, if it stood alone, would miss one whole purpose of the Incarnation—the sanctification of the material universe and the body of man.

A sacrifice essentially involves two parts—an interior disposition and an exterior gift. Without the first the sacrifice is ineffectual: without the second the offering is not a sacrifice. The three ideas of the Christian Sacrifice are dependence, penitence, and self-surrender. At every Eucharist we offer bread and wine and water as creatures to their Creator, to acknowledge our dependence upon God, and to thank Him for all His gifts in nature. We bring the first-fruits of our life and give it to God, saying: ‘All things come of Thee, and of Thine own do we give Thee.’

Then, when in answer to the prayers of the Church and by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit our bread and wine have been uplifted into union with Christ’s Divine Humanity and have become His Body and His Blood, the veils

of His Presence and the channels of His Life, we offer Christ to God the Father, as sinners pleading with an all-Holy Judge, saying :

Look, Father, look on His anointed Face
And only look on us as found in Him ;
Look not on our misusings of Thy Grace,
Our prayer so languid, and our faith so dim :
For lo ! between our sins and their reward
We set the Passion of Thy Son our Lord.

Then, when by communion Christ dwells in us and we in Him, we offer ourselves to God, as sons to the all-loving Father, saying :

Here we offer and present to Thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and lively sacrifice unto Thee.

Then the sacrifice is perfected. To offer the interior disposition alone, the praise and thanksgiving without any exterior symbol, would not be to offer sacrifice.

To offer bread and wine alone would be to offer the material universe without man. To offer man alone in his sins and failure would be to offer an unclean and imperfect thing which God could not accept.

To offer Christ alone would be to offer the Head without the Body. But when our bread and wine have been caught up into union with the risen

and ascended Body of Christ: when through them He uplifts us, body and soul, into union with Himself, and presents us to the Father, then we see the splendour of His great Redemption, which embraces the whole universe in the arms of God's mercy.

There is another aspect of the Holy Sacrifice. The Body of Christ is not merely that which we receive in the Blessed Sacrament: it is the whole Church, living and departed. 'Ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof.'¹

Each one of us 'in one Spirit' is 'baptized into one Body'² through which Christ is working out the world's redemption. Each in his place—in mill and factory and workshop and mine, in office or profession, as merchant, doctor, nurse, student, teacher—labours throughout the week in God's service, as a member of Christ through whom He teaches and acts on the world. On the Lord's Day we, the members of the Body, meet at the Lord's service; each brings his little contribution of love and labour and suffering with all their manifold imperfections and failures, and these with us are caught up into union with the perfect Sacrifice of Christ, and Christ our High Priest offers us to the Father. It is the offering of the Church, the Body of Christ, to the Father,

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 27.

² 1 Cor. xii. 13.

in which the work of the past week in prayer and intercession and manifold activities is cleansed and presented to the Father; and in which we are again purified and consecrated afresh to His service.

It is a real degradation of the idea of the Church to rest content with that conception of it which regards its chief end as the salvation of its members, a ring-fence of the redeemed. This is a true but subordinate end of the Church. We are predestinated and elected; chosen, not for our own sake, but for the sake of others. The true end of the Church is the glory of God; its final end is so to labour as to gather together 'a great flock in all parts of the world to set forth the eternal praise of Thy Holy Name.' The purpose of our election is that through our labours in prayer and witness the universe may fulfil its Divine destiny, and unite in offering a perfect reflection of God's image, and in giving an answering echo to His love. Man, who in himself recapitulates all the process of evolution, stands at the altar as the high priest of God's creation, through whom the whole universe—the stars and flowers, the birds and beasts—utters at last an articulate song of praise to the Most High God, of gratitude for His goodness, of penitence for our sin. The Holy Eucharist is the return of the prodigal led back to the Father by the true elder Brother who could not

stay at home, but came down on earth to seek and to save that which was lost. And as we confess our sins, 'no more worthy to be called Thy son,' pleading only the Sacrifice of Christ, God accepts us in the Beloved; and, cleansed in the precious Blood of Christ and incorporated into His Body, we offer ourselves in Christ to God, and hear the Father's cry: 'This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.'¹

It is important to remember that the sacrifice which Christ offered to the Father is not a merely spiritual sacrifice of obedience, trust, self-surrender, and good will. For the Son of God must have always had these feelings or this spiritual attitude toward the Father, since they are the characteristics of true Sonship; and as far as human thought can imagine Divine relationship, they must from all eternity have been the attitude of God the Son to God the Father before the world was created.

Nor is the Sacrifice of Christ merely spiritual sorrow for the sins of man. From the joy of the angels over one sinner that repenteth we may legitimately infer that they, too, feel such sorrow for the insult which the sinner offers to the majesty of God. This spiritual sacrifice of deep sorrow and grief over the sins of man has always been offered by the Son to the Father ever since man sinned. It does not

¹ S. Luke xv. 24.

involve an Incarnation. The Lamb was 'slain from the foundation of the world.'¹

The sacrifice which Christ offers to the Father is more than a spiritual sacrifice of sorrow and praise and thanksgiving. His sacrifice is His perfect human nature—body, heart, mind, and will all unstained by sin and perfect in their response to the Father's Will. This is the Sacrifice He offered moment by moment throughout His life on earth with blood and agony and breaking heart. This is the Sacrifice He for ever represents, or presents again, in each Eucharist amidst joy and exultation and in union with the ever-growing Body of the redeemed.

'When this assertion of the sacrificial character of the Eucharist is joined with the patristic teaching about the presence of the humanity of Christ in the elements, it may be seen in what way the Eucharist is a sacrifice. A distinction is made between the bloody sacrifice and the unbloody sacrifice. The bloody sacrifice is the offering of the as yet unglorified humanity in agony and death on the cross. The unbloody sacrifice is the offering of the now glorified humanity without pain or death on the altar. The sacrifice is the same sacrifice, because in each case that which is offered is the Body and Blood of Christ, and because the

¹ Rev. xiii. 8.

Priest is the same ; that is, our Lord acting by Himself on the cross, acting through his ministers on the altar. The mode in which the sacrifice is offered is different, because on the cross the humanity was offered in its natural condition, and therefore in humiliation, pain, and death ; while at the altar it is offered in the glorified condition in which it lives in the risen life of our Lord. The sacrifice on the cross is the atonement for all the sins of man. The sacrifice of the Eucharist is the pleading of that atonement by the presentation of the same offering to the Father.' ¹

This, then, is the glorious vision of the Catholic Faith. The world breaking forth into consciousness in man. Man becoming self-conscious and, by sinful self-assertion, rising in rebellion against God. God the Son taking our manhood into union with His Divine Person, and, having cleansed it from sin and having shattered the spell of Satan, presenting it pure and undefiled to the Father ; and then by the Holy Sacraments incorporating us one by one into that Divine Humanity, that we too may fulfil our destiny and be presented to the Father in Him.

So the disaster of sin is saved from becoming an eternal ruin. So the tragedy of man's failure is redeemed. So the discord of man's fall is resolved

¹ Dr. Stone, *Outlines of Christian Dogma*.

into the harmony of his fulfilment. Not merely in the dogma of theology, but in the living experience of the person redeemed, the ceaseless discord of heart and mind and will, of passion in conflict with conscience, is resolved into the perfect harmony of peace with God.

And what Christ did *for* us on the stage of history He does *in* us in the Blessed Sacrament, by which the perfect atonement of the race is applied to the individual.

2. *The Blessed Sacrament.*—When Christ was on earth He was offered bread and wine, and He took them into union with His Divine Humanity—they became His Body and His Blood, the veils of His Presence and the channels of His Life.

In the Holy Eucharist we offer Him bread and wine. In answer to our prayers and in fulfilment of His promise He takes then into union with His Divine Humanity—they become His Body and His Blood, the veils of His Presence and the channels of His Life. Then He bestows Himself on us ‘that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His Body, and our souls washed by His most precious Blood.’

The bestowal of Christ’s Humanity upon us in the Blessed Sacrament, and our incorporation into Him, is a supernatural mystery which we must never desire or attempt to explain. A mystery is a truth which is beyond the reach of our reason

and the analysis of our logic. It is not contrary to our reason, but beyond its power of analysis. If there were no mysteries surrounding God, if we were able to explain Him exhaustively, we should worship ourselves. For it is obvious that the person who can exhaustively explain another is greater than the one explained. This self-worship is the pet idol of the modern mind, and makes it impatient of mystery and passionately hostile to the supernatural in any form.

And it is just this attitude of intellectual self-assertion to which Christ flings down His challenge in teaching us what to believe about the Blessed Sacrament.

In the synagogue of Capernaum He fought the battle with the modern mind of that day, and taught us to receive the Truth as He reveals it, even when our understanding cannot fully comprehend it.

The issue is vital. Do we mean to walk by sight or by faith? Are we going to be docile learners or detached critics? Is Christianity to be merely the highest reach of human thought or the lowliest condescension of Divine revelation? Is it a birth from above or merely an evolution from within?

Must the Catholic Faith nimbly accommodate itself to the ever-shifting conclusions of the modern

mind, or is it a Divine word of revelation which can guide every generation to the Truth ?

Is our salvation to be built on the shifting sands of men's opinions, or on the Rock of Ages ? Have we not in Christ that Word of God for which Plato sighed in that noble passage in which he realizes the limitations of human reason ?

' If we cannot of our own effort discover the truth, then it behoves us to choose among the opinions of men that which may seem to be the best and most assured, and, clinging to it as to a raft, to make our adventure across the sea of life ; unless, indeed, we may find a stouter barque to entrust ourselves to—namely, a Divine Word which may carry us in safety to the end of the voyage.'

This Divine Word is the Christ. And He demands of us faith—trust in Him.

He proclaimed in the synagogue of Capernaum a truth most abhorrent to the ' modern mind ' of the two thousand Jews who were listening to Him : ' I am the living bread which came down out of heaven : if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever : yea and the bread which I will give is My flesh, for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove one with another, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat ? Jesus therefore said unto them, . . . Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye

have not life in yourselves. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life ; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me, and I in him.' ¹

'Many, therefore, of His disciples, when they heard this, said, This is a hard saying ; who can hear it ? ' And our Lord offered them no word of explanation. He only added another mystery which would still more strain their faith—the prophecy of the Ascension. ' Doth this cause you to stumble ? What then if ye should behold the Son of man ascending where he was before ? ' When many of his disciples went back and walked no more with Him, this desertion in no way moved Him to weaken His doctrine or accommodate it to their understanding. He simply turns to the chosen twelve and asks : ' Would ye also go away ? ' ² He was willing utterly to shatter His work rather than accommodate His teaching.

He put forth a profound and repellent mystery, and demanded that His hearers should accept it, trusting in Him when they could not understand. He did not say : ' These are my opinions, and I hope that you will find them coincide with yours.' He did not say : ' These are my views, and I trust that

¹ S. John vi. 51-7.

² S. John vi. 60, 61, 67.

they are in harmony with the modern mind.' He did not say : ' This is how it seems to me, but it all depends upon your point of view : and if this suggestion causes offence to others and wounds their susceptibilities, you must tactfully modify it for the sake of charity and peace.'

He taught the truth with Divine authority, and He placed before His disciples the alternative of trusting Him or leaving Him. ' Would ye also go away ? '

History has abundantly justified this method of authoritative teaching.

The bestowal of His Humanity is knit together with the belief in His Divinity. When the Real Presence of Christ in His Body and Blood in the blessed Sacrament has been explained away, men have lost faith in His Deity.

The blessed Sacrament is the shrine and shield of the Catholic Faith, the Burning Bush of Christ's presence, the shrine of the supernatural. When the Church's doctrine is neglected or forgotten or explained away, or evaporated into a mere subjective effort of man's memory recalling with gratitude Christ's death upon the Cross ; when Christ's presence is regarded as subjective, and made dependent on the faith of the recipient, so that it ultimately resolves itself into an effort of his individual imagination, then man seems to lose hold on those

miracles which marked the entrance and withdrawal of God manifested in the flesh, the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection.

Where the Sacrament of His Body is neglected the truth about His Body comes ultimately to be denied.

The Church's teaching is well summarized by Fr. Kelly in 'The Church and Religious Unity,' p. 76: 'We believe that in the Sacrament of the Holy Communion Christ has provided for us in the fulfilment of His promise a representation of Himself, a true renewal to us day by day of the Bodily Presence of His spiritual Humanity, that which suffered and is now ascended and glorified, in order that we, partaking of the Humanity thus given, might enter into that union of the earthly and spiritual which was the redemption manifested in the Body of His Resurrection.'

In this sacrament we have the highest manifestation of the sacramental principle. It is a localization of the presence of Christ's Humanity, focussed at a given point in time and space, a burning bush on fire yet unconsumed. It is a stimulus by which an external presence quickens and educes our devotional response. It is a symbol: the bread, the little grains of corn kneaded into one loaf, standing for the Church the Body of Christ knit together in the blessed Sacrament; the wine standing for the

Life poured out. It is a virgin birth in which the Holy Spirit overshadowing the faith of the Church makes Christ present in His Humanity, His Body and His Blood, by which our life is knit with His. And it is the perpetual assertion of His Resurrection. For He does not feed us with the dust and worms of a far-off corruption. But the most Holy Body and Blood which He bestows upon us is that Body which saw no corruption, but rose triumphant from the tomb and ascended into Heaven. And this teaching, given to us by S. John, is re-echoed by S. Paul as the experience of Christians : ' The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ ? ' ¹

We do not know, nor in any way desire to know, how this mystery is accomplished. We believe it, accept it, trustfully ; on the word of Christ and of His Church. We know and care to know as little and as much as the little child knows who nestles in his mother's bosom and is nourished by her life. We know that the arms of the Son of God are round us, and that the life of the Son of God strengthens us. We know that there is a blending of our life with the life of our Risen Lord, so that, body and soul, we are interpenetrated with the Body and Blood of Jesus in such a way

¹ 1 Cor. x. 16.

that we dwell in Him and He in us. We know that the same Body which hung upon the breast of the blessed Virgin Mary and which bled to death upon the Cross of Calvary saw no corruption, but was raised triumphant from the grave on Easter Day and, caught up on to the spiritual plane, ascended to heaven, whence our Lord stoops to bestow it upon us in the blessed Sacrament.

The Blessed Sacrament of the altar is the shrine and shield of our faith in the Divine Humanity of the Son of God. It is no mere focussing of the Spirit of the universe as in the Burning Bush. It is the bestowal of the Divine Humanity of the Son of God.

The altar is our Bethlehem where, by the virgin birth of the overshadowing Spirit, Christ is present in His Body and Blood in an age-long extension of His Incarnation. The altar is our Calvary where we realize that, by the love which blends His Life with ours, men have the awful power to 'crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame,'—our Calvary where we plead that death which broke the power of Satan and set man free. The altar is our garden of the Resurrection where the risen Lord calls us by name, our Emmaus where He makes Himself known to us in the breaking of the bread. It is our mount of the

Ascension, where we are caught up in the power of the Resurrection to move in heavenly places as 'our life is hid with Christ in God.'

And this holy mystery is the application of the atonement, which reconciled the race to God, to the individual person in the fullness of his human nature, the outward touch sanctifying our bodies as the inward life blends with the soul.

He has made our human nature 'at one' with His Divine Person, 'not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God.' He makes the bread and wine 'at one' with His Divine Humanity, and then by the bestowal of His Body and Blood He makes us, body and soul, 'at one' with Himself in order that He may make us 'at one' with the Father. In the glorious process of atonement we note that there is no destruction, only a Divine fulfilment. His Humanity is not destroyed by its union with His Divine Person. It is the Burning Bush, on fire yet not consumed. And our humanity is not destroyed by incorporation into His Divine Humanity. We become a burning bush on fire yet not consumed, aflame with Deity yet still as human as before, or more human, for now in Him we have the promise and the power to fulfil the destiny for which we were created.

At the altar the purpose and meaning of life

and suffering and love are revealed to us, and the answer to the riddle of the universe is given in the words, 'Manhood taken into God.' For this the long ages have been travailing in the pangs of birth. This is the glory which is to be revealed when the universe gathered up into man, and man incorporated into Christ's Body the Church, becomes a burning bush aflame with God, and, uttering in the Divine mystery of the Eucharist a passionate cry of self-surrender, becomes wholly responsive to the love of God.

'For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only so, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.'¹

The strength and splendour of the sacramental principle is that it alone gives the true analysis of the universe and of human nature. It uplifts

¹ Rom. viii. 19-23.

the whole universe into the great redemption. And it claims the whole of our human nature, body as well as soul, for God. It uplifts us to the mountain-top of Horeb, and tells us that we are to be the burning bush aflame with God yet not consumed. And there on the mountain top of the blessed Sacrament we hold communion with God, the great 'I am that I am,' and learn His sympathy: 'I have seen the affliction of my people . . . and have heard their cry . . . for I know their sorrows . . . and I am come down to deliver them and to bring them up.'¹ It uplifts us in Christ on to the mountain-top of Tabor, and assures us that we need not destroy our human nature, but only by faith make it entirely sensitive to the God who dwells within, so that we too may be transfigured with the outshining of God, and hold communion with the Saints. And when through suffering we have been entirely transfigured into the likeness of Christ, in the power of His Resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, we in Him and He in us, we too may hope to hear the voice from heaven: 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.'

¹ Exod. iii. 7, 8.

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